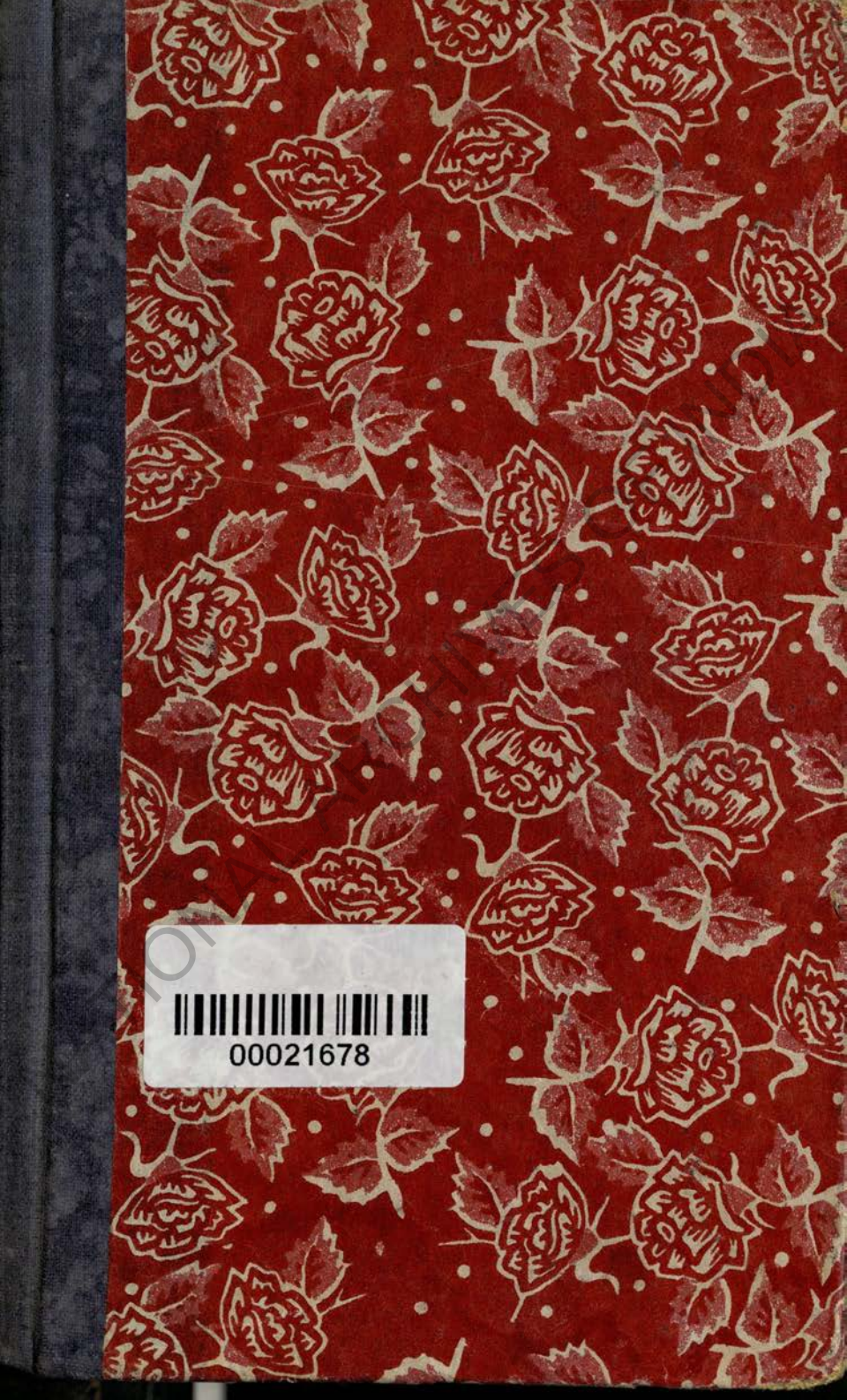
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A VARIED LIFE

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A VARIED LIFE

A RECORD OF MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVICE, OF SPORT AND OF TRAVEL IN INDIA, CENTRAL ASIA AND PERSIA

1849–1902

BY GEN. SIR THOMAS EDWARD GORDON
K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
AUTHOR OF "THE ROOF OF THE WORLD" AND "PERSIA REVISITED"

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

THE possession of a continuous diary, which I have kept up since 1857, and some notes of my earlier experiences, has tempted me to produce this account of a varied life. I find that my diary notes recall vividly the events and matters of which they speak, and prompt recollection of the fuller information concerning them and their times, which is stored in the cells of my memory. My personal acquaintance with five Central Asian Sovereigns during an active life in the East may lend some interest to my story. I am painfully aware of the egotism which runs through the narrative, but I find some relief in the common knowledge that this defect is more or less inseparable from an autobiography. I have tried to make the Memoir as light as possible, and not to burden it too heavily with minor details, or much repetition of what has appeared in my books, the "Roof of the World" and "Persia Revisited."

I am under obligation to the *Pioneer* for kind permission to reproduce the article on the Kashgar Mission, which appeared in their issue of 24th July 1874, and the extract from a further article in a later issue the same year.

T. E. GORDON.

May 1906.

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A VARIED LIFE

CHAPTER I

(1849-1859)

THE following extract from an Elgin newspaper of April 1902 appears to me to be an appropriate beginning for this Memoir:—

"An interesting ceremony took place the other day in the restored church of St Donan, Kildonan, Sutherland, when the Presbytery of Dornoch met to take over the church and the gifts which have been presented to it. The Presbytery also took into its care a large bronze of some interest to the Church of Scotland, in memory of Adam Gordon of Griamachary. It is inscribed—'To the Glory of God, and in memory of Adam Gordon of Griamachary, Kildonan, born 1750, died 1831, and his sons, John, Major in the 2nd Queen's Regiment; William, Captain in the 2nd Queen's Regiment; Thomas, Captain in the 1st Royal Scots; Adam, Lieutenant in the Cape Regiment, who served their country in the wars with France early in the last century. This tablet is erected in 1901 by General Sir Thomas Edward Gordon, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., youngest son of Captain W. Gordon, and by the Hon. John Edward Gordon, M.P., eldest son of the Right Hon. Edward Strathearn, Lord Gordon of Drumearn, Lord Advocate in 1867 and 1874, a son of Major John Gordon.'"

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The old tombstone over my grandfather's grave in the churchyard of St Donan had become so weather-worn as to make the inscription on it partly illegible, and accordingly this tablet was put up on the wall of the restored church,[1] over the Griamachary pew.

My father and his three brothers were the first of the family to enter the Army. The next generation also gave four of its members to the Army, two of them being sons of Major John, namely, Lieutenant-Colonel John, of the 47th Regiment, and Surgeon-General Huntly George, A.M.S., the other two being the twin sons of Captain William, namely, my brother, General Sir John, and myself. The next succeeding generation (third) again gave four members to the Army, three of whom are now serving. These are Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. Frederic Gordon, D.S.O., of the Gordon Highlanders, son of the late Lord Gordon of Drumearn (who was a son of Major John), and the two sons of my twin brother, namely, Captain Edward Ian Drumearn, of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, and Lieutenant John Frederic Strathearn, of the Royal

[1] The site of this church has a very interesting history of ancient date, as is shown on two of the gifts lately presented to it. These gifts are, a Communion service of plate which was formerly Queen Adelaide's, and used in her private chapel, and a finely carved Communion table. On the lid of the oaken chest containing the Communion plate there is Her Majesty's monogram, surmounted by the crown, and on the front the following inscription: "To the Glory of God, and in memory of St Donan, first preacher and minister in this strath of the Ülligh, who, together with his Collegium of fifty-two disciples, was slain by the heathen Vikings in the island of Eigg, 17th April 617 A.D., these Communion vessels are now, on St Donan's day, 1902, dedicated by Miss Radcliffe, tenant of Kildonan, to be for ever the property of the Church of Scotland." On the lower part of the Communion table there is a silver plate bearing the inscription: "The gift of Major Garroway of Rosemount, Lanarkshire, in memory of Donnan, first Minister in this Valley, martyred at Eigg by Vikings after celebrating Holy Communion, 17th April 617 A.D."

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Scots (Lothian Regiment). The fourth, Major Huntly John, of the 41st (Welch) Regiment, son of Surgeon-General Huntly George Gordon, died in 1885.

My twin brother, John (General Sir John James Hood Gordon, K.C.B., member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India), and I received our early education under Mr Robert Burton, of Dalmeny village, a dominie of well-known merit, and from his school we passed to the Scottish Naval and Military Academy in Edinburgh. We entered the Army on the same day, 21st August 1849, my brother being appointed Ensign by purchase in the 74th Highland Regiment, and I Ensign without purchase in the 4th King's Own, both stationed in England. Till July of that year there was no regular examination for first appointment to the Army, nor indeed for promotion, which was by purchase, except in succession to death vacancies, or in other cases when special circumstances prevailed to forbid sale. The new rules came into force in July 1849, and we were in the second batch of candidates who underwent examination. We went up from the Scottish Naval and Military Academy to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, where the examination took place, and were successful in passing. We were so wonderfully alike in appearance, manner, and voice, that the examining military surgeon wished to put me back when I entered his room for medical inspection after my brother had been approved by him, saying that he had finished with me; and then, on hearing my explanation, he jokingly said that his inspection of such a singular "double" need not be long.

On being gazetted, our uncle and guardian, Major John Gordon, formerly of the 2nd Queen's, presented us at the Horse Guards to General Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief

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(the Duke of Wellington), mentioning that we were the twin sons of the late Captain William Gordon, 2nd Queen's, who had done good service in Spain. As we were without the private income necessary for army life at home, we asked to be transferred to regiments serving in India, and this drew forth the kind remark that we were too young to go to India then (we looked less than our age of seventeen), and a year longer at home would be advisable. The Military Secretary also said that the transfers would be made as wished, and that we need not embark for the East till the following summer; and further, that we need not join the General Depôt at Chatham previous to embarkation. The condition, however, was made that as we had just come up from the Scottish Naval and Military Academy, we should resume some of our studies there for a short time. On being asked what we would undertake for further instruction, we said mathematics, military history, French, and drawing, and thus we returned to school for two terms as commissioned officers on full pay. We were shortly afterwards transferred to regiments in India, my brother to the 29th, and myself to the 61st, both serving in the Bengal Presidency.

The first of the several lucky accidents which have helped me towards a measure of success in life occurred when I was sixteen. At the age of twelve the names of my brother and myself had been put down in the Military Secretary's list for commissions without purchase, strong claims for this consideration being urged by reason of the services of our father and his three brothers, all of whom had served their country well in the wars with France. Commissions were often given at the age of sixteen, and just when I was on the tip-toe of expectation, there came an announcement that as only one of the two commissions could be without purchase, the other would be given on pay-

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ment of £450. This unexpected difficulty very nearly put an end to all my military aspirations. In fact it did do so for a time. I was entered as a Government clerk in a military departmental office at Edinburgh, and while working there had the good fortune to attract the attention of a staff officer, a "friend of the family," who sympathised with me in my deep disappointment, and pleaded my cause so warmly, that I was rescued from my desk of despair and sent back to the Academy. The required £450 for a commission by purchase was obtained for us, and this sum we repaid in after years.

Captain Robert Dudgeon of the 61st, son of an old Peninsular officer residing in Edinburgh, was returning to India in the summer of 1850 with his friend, E. W. John Knox, a senior lieutenant in the 75th, and it was arranged that we should all go out together in Green's well-known sailing ship *Agincourt*, 1,000 tons. We embarked at Portsmouth on 20th July, and reached Calcutta on 11th December 1850, making an unusually long voyage. Three weeks of the time, however, were spent at Cape Town, the ship having to refit there a new foremast and bowsprit, the result of a very severe storm which so split and sprung the old spars as to necessitate short sail and slow progress until harbour was reached. The voyage, after I got over my "salting" sea-sickness, was to me a time of joy. Everything was novel and delightful to me — the cabins, the "table," the company, and especially the midshipmen's "Mess." Green's first-class passenger ships of those days carried a number of young gentlemen, rated as midshipmen, under training as officers for the Mercantile Marine service, and I found most enjoyable fellowship with them. Under their guidance I learnt to explore the heights of the mizen mast, the midshipmen's practical school of instruction aloft, and thence was led to venture on the rigging of the

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sky-high main, where, of course, I was promptly seized and tied up, to be cast loose on promise to pay the "first footing" of the landsman, as decreed by ancient mariner fo'c'stle law.

We were informed at Calcutta that the 29th was stationed at Meerut, 1,000 miles up-country, and the 61st at Peshawar, about 600 miles further on. At that time there was not a single mile of passenger railway in India, nor was there even a horse carriage service until 400 miles above Calcutta. Passenger carriages, with room for two in each, were propelled and dragged by coolies as far as Benares, 400 miles distant, and thence horses were used. For two ordinary sized people these carriages were comfortable enough, but for two broad-shouldered, six-foot grenadiers, such as Dudgeon and Knox (who really were in the grenadier companies of their respective regiments), the fit was tight. It was suggested that we, the twins, then slim youths, might add to their comfort by each sharing a carriage with a big companion; and to this we assented. We decided to see as much as possible of famous places on the way up-country, and we thoroughly worked our way over the sights of Benares, Agra, and Delhi.

I was threatened with detention at Cawnpur, where, owing to the troops at Peshawar being crowded in temporary quarters, the season's recruits for the 61st and 98th, which were in garrison there, had been stopped, but I begged hard to be allowed to proceed. Dudgeon was detained to command the detachment, and I was permitted to pass on. As Meerut lay in my way forward, I was able to accompany my brother there, and see him join his regiment, the 29th. Thence I went on by myself, and was again stopped at Ambala; but the general in command gave way to my urgent entreaty to be permitted to go on towards Peshawar, on the condition that I should overtake a detachment

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of cavalry and infantry recruits for regiments in the Punjab, then marching north, and join for duty. This I did, and I finally reached Rawal Pindi with a party for the 53rd, which was stationed there. I was directed to remain at that place until an escort forward should be available, and I became an honorary member of the Mess of the 53rd, in which I found a friend, Ensign F. Solly Flood,[1] whose acquaintance I had made at Sandhurst. And through him I was introduced to Major William Rose Mansfield,[2] with whom Flood and I were destined to be most pleasantly associated in after years. At length a returning small Gurkha escort became available for my further journey, but on reaching Attock, on the Indus, 50 miles from Peshawar, I was informed by the Fort staff officer that all small parties of troops were being stopped in order to form a reinforcing escort for an ammunition camel train, which was shortly expected, bound for Peshawar. The dangerous part of the road, which was infested with murderous Pathan robbers, lay from the Indus onward (the country had been but lately annexed), but in my eagerness to reach the end of my long journey and join my regiment I went on without the escort, and reached Peshawar in four days. Halfway, I fell in with two squadrons of irregular cavalry, sent out to meet the ammunition convoy, and I pitched my tent alongside their camp. An officer came to see me, and expressed surprise at my safety, saying that it was an instance of Providence watching over the simple "griff."

At last, after more than nine months of voyage and travel from Portsmouth and Calcutta, I reached Peshawar on 1st May 1851, and joined my regiment. I found the officers busy with the housing problem, and the erection of sun-dried brick bungalows, but

[1] Major-General F. Solly Flood, C.B.

[2] The late General Lord Sandhurst, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

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the Mess remained in tents, roofed over with a mud-plastered reed thatch. I joined with the other subaltern of my company in building a small house. We erected a good roomy stable first, as this could be done quickly, and occupied it during the heat of the day, changing to our tents at night. Fever of a very severe type, produced by the summer heat exhalations from an adjoining marsh, was then causing heavy loss of life in the regiment, and as a new arrival, I was soon attacked. But kind care and a good constitution helped me through, and when I became convalescent I was sent for change of air to the old Sikh Government palace and barracks, which were situated on a high position just inside the Peshawar city walls, and had been opened up and adapted as quarters for a British infantry garrison of three companies. At that time the 61st furnished the occupying detachment, and the place in some way was a pleasant relief to me from my stable residence in the cantonment. The detachment was commanded by a captain of most remarkable appearance, so much so that it was always a subject of surprise how he had ever been admitted into the Army. But this had happened when nepotism prevailed in the service, and by this means the officer in question was for the time invested, in regard to myself, with the fullest power to inflict pains and penalties on all and sundry under his command. He was devoted to duty, and had recourse to sternness of manner to cover the unfavourable effect of his want of physical fitness. Unfortunately, I found myself in his disfavour by the accident of having my sense of humour touched during his reading of the Church Service at a Sunday parade. The Protestants of the three companies were, as usual, formed on three sides of a hollow square, and were at "attention," awaiting the order to "stand at ease" previous to the reading of the service. The captain had taken up his place on the fourth side of the square, and, forgetting

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to give the order, began to read. He had said, "Dearly beloved brethren" when he saw his omission, and, without pause or change of tone, added, "Stand at ease," in such a manner that my gravity was quite upset, and the loud smile which I failed to smother was so apparent that the ranks were visibly moved by my example. And then there was a pause, which my conscience told me meant rebuke. I was sent for after parade to hear the captain's views and remarks on good order and military discipline. From these I gathered that it was my duty always to be sad and serious on parade, and under no circumstances was a sense of humour permissible.

After I had completely recovered from the effects of fever, and my hair had grown sufficiently (for it had been close cut almost to a "shave"), I called on Brigadier-General Sir Colin Campbell,[1] commanding the Peshawar Field Force, to present a letter of introduction from a good friend to him in his early regimental days, Mr Gledstanes. I did not see him then, but afterwards, when I had the opportunity of meeting him, and was asked if he could do anything for me, I said what I specially desired was that which all young officers were longing for—a chance of active service. He promised to do what he could, and a few months later, on the expedition against the powerful Momund tribe being ordered, he requested Colonel Vicars, then commanding the 61st, to attach me to one of the companies which were to join the force. This was done, and I was present during the active operations on the north-western frontier in the end of 1851. I went with the Light company under Captain Redmond,[2] which was most gratifying to me, it being regarded as the *élite* of the regiment. And very proud I was when, later, I was permanently posted

[1] The late Field-Marshal Lord Clyde, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

[2] The late Lieutenant-General J. Patrick Redmond, C.B.

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to that company, and exchanged my epaulettes for the "wings"[1] of the Light infantry. On this occasion I again met Major Mansfield of the 53rd, who accompanied the Momund expedition as a volunteer, and guest of Sir Colin Campbell. These two afterwards came together at Constantinople and in the Crimea, and on Sir Colin being appointed to the chief command in India in 1857, he arranged that Colonel W. R. Mansfield should accompany him as chief of the staff, with the rank of Major-General.

The Momund expedition was undertaken to punish a section of that powerful hill tribe for repeated depredations on the neighbouring villages under British rule in the Peshawar valley. They held a strong position at the mouth of the Kabul river, where it issues from the Lalpura defile, through which it flows from Afghan territory, and when our force moved against them the Light company of the 61st covered the right advance. Brigadier-General Sir Colin Campbell, who had come forward to the skirmishing line, pointed out to Captain Redmond, in command there, a hill on the flank which might conceal some of the enemy, and suggested that it should be reconnoitred. Redmond said that a party under an officer had been detached for the purpose, and, on learning that I was the officer, Sir Colin said: "That young fellow! Well, I hope you sent a steady serjeant with him," and of course this became the "little joke" of the company for some days. Sir Colin, accompanied by Major Mansfield and an orderly officer, had gone round the outlying picquets the evening before, and finding me in command of the picquet furnished by the 61st detachment, put me through a short catechism, and then directed his

[1] Shoulder ornaments worn by Light Infantry in place of epaulettes. They were semi-circular in shape, covering the head of the arm, and were meant to signify wing-like, swift movement.

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attention to the serjeant with me, showing the interest in him and the men which made him so popular in the ranks. He had a high opinion of the non-commissioned officers of the 61st. It was generally acknowledged that the senior serjeants were unusually good; one reason for this being that under the system which prevailed in the corps, they were entrusted with much more of the details of drill, management, and administration of their companies than was generally done in other regiments. The best serjeants thus came to the front, and it was not surprising that more than the usual number were promoted to the commissioned grade in the 61st. There were five of these in the regiment while I was serving with it, all officers of fair education and good natural abilities. I think that at the time, when cash counted before brains for first appointment as a commissioned officer, educational requirements were more strictly proved in the case of a serjeant than in that of a gentleman candidate. When the 61st landed in India in 1845, and it became known that the post of interpreter to the regiment was a prize worth working for, several of the officers took up the study of Hindustani. The serjeant-major, whose name was Reid, also joined in the competition, and was successful in the first examination, while they failed. The post could not be held by him as a non-commissioned officer, but having previously been recommended for a commission, he was gazetted ensign in the regiment shortly after, and was then appointed interpreter.

The days of hard drinking had passed before I joined the Army, but there still survived followers of the old school who deplored the degeneracy of the new, and these, in some regiments, exercised an evil influence by force of example, strengthened by taunts and derision. Some of these festive "old boys" were often popular Mess favourites, liked for their ready

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wit and lively songs, and ridicule from them, levelled at those who, from motives of economy or disinclination, were "poor drinkers," occasionally had a demoralising effect. One captain in particular in the 61st, an officer of long service who had exchanged from another regiment, made himself a terror to the juniors of temperate habits by reading aloud the wine accounts of low figure, and remarking in taunting terms on the ways and means of "poor creatures and milksops" who aspired to be leaders of men. Some of us writhed under his biting sarcasm, and we were delighted when an opportunity was given us of wiping off the score we had against him.

Three of us, juniors, were looking at the month's Mess bills which, according to custom, had been placed on a side table for inspection, when, to our horror, the terrible captain made his appearance, and taking up the book, proceeded to read out our moderate bills, declaring in an offensively funny manner that they were too small for "officers and gentlemen." Stung by his remarks we all replied angrily that we differed with him, and becoming annoyed at our defiant manner he looked for a victim to bear his wrath, and picked up in his strong arms (for he was of powerful build) one of our number, an undersized young subaltern of inferior physique, and forcibly seated him on the table: he held his arms firmly down so that he was unable to move, and mocked him with soft speeches while handling him roughly. He refused to let him go, and laughed at his vain efforts to escape. But on his relaxing his grip for a moment while shaking with derisive laughter, the little subaltern, in whom the spirit of his father (a gallant officer who made his mark with the 61st at Salamanca) had risen to resent the indignity put upon him, suddenly freed his right arm, and striking out blindly at the jeering face before him, found his fist in his tormentor's eye. The quickness

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of the blow, and its pain and shame, gave the subaltern his opportunity to escape, and he took refuge with us. The bully captain, on recovering from his humiliating surprise, burst into a storm of wild words, expressing his determination to give back with interest the blow he had received, but on discovering that he had to settle with two bigger fellows first, he prudently confined himself to threats. While we were in angry discussion, one of the majors entered the tent, and after ascertaining the facts of the occurrence, he took the captain aside and advised him to let the matter drop. To this he agreed, and to his credit be it told, the compact was faithfully kept, and he troubled us no more, although for some days after he bore the ugly mark of a bad black eye.

I marched with the regiment to Kasauli early in 1852, and availing myself of opportunities of leisure and instruction took up the study of the Hindustani language, and passed as interpreter in March 1853. My brother in the 29th also passed this examination about the same time, and we both thus became qualified for certain extra-regimental appointments. We were determined to get on in the service by our own efforts, and we took the first opportunity, after fully learning regimental work, to study the Hindustani language. It was our early success in this direction, coupled with regimental recommendation, which gave us favourable openings for advancement. As a recreation after these studies, we arranged to make a holiday walking tour in the Himalayas, Little Tibet, and Kashmir. My brother came up from his station in the plains to Kasauli, where we made our simple preparations for the long trip, which we carried out successfully and enjoyed much. The walk over the high passes, and especially the Parang-la, 18,000 feet above the sea, was hard work for youths of twenty-one, but we were in excellent condition and stood it well. At that

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early period of British rule in the upper Himalayan provinces, but few Europeans had been seen in the elevated valleys which we visited, and notably at Dankar, the capital of the high-lying district of Spiti, our extremely youthful appearance and striking twin likeness seemed to attract the popular attention in a manner which invested us with something of a romantic character. The inhabitants of Spiti were originally pure Tibetan, but while retaining the marked signs of their Mongolian descent in face and figure, yet admixture with other races can be clearly seen in many of them. The village is piled up in picturesque Tibetan fashion, topped with a Buddhist monastery on the precipitous projections of an isolated cliff, backed by towering ranges of perpetual snow, which divide the district from the great plateau of Western Tibet. It appeared from the manner of the villagers as if sentiment, in accordance with their superstitious ideas, had pictured us as wandering youths from some other world, travelling about in the simplest style to judge for ourselves of their joys and sorrows. The interest and curiosity created by our arrival at Dankar culminated in embarrassing attentions on the part of some village maidens, who invaded the privacy of our tent to present small offerings of spring wild flowers. Later on these same robust damsels competed briskly with the men as "coolies" for hire to carry our camp kit a day's journey to the next stage.

While in Kashmir, during this trip, we were introduced to the astute ruler of the State, the Maharajah Gulab Singh, who had raised himself from cavalry soldier to a high position in Runjit Singh's service. He was wholly uneducated, and quite unable to read or write, but he was gifted with a marvellous memory which served him so well that he could check his revenue and other State accounts, which were usually

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AN OLD VILLAGE BELLE IN THE HIGH HIMALAYA.

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read to him in public, by verbally noting discrepancies and differences in the most effective manner. Needless to say, a man of his shrewd mind could use to full advantage the mutual jealousies of the many candidates for his favour. Runjit Singh had originally rewarded him with the principality of Jamu, whence, nominally on behalf of the Lahore State, he extended his authority over his neighbours, and eventually annexed Ladakh (Little Tibet). He had fully consolidated his power when we visited Kashmir in 1853, and he maintained at Srinagar, the capital, a well-trained force of artillery and infantry under the instructional command of Colonel Gardner,[1] a military adventurer who made his way into the Punjab from Central Asia in 1831, and entered the service of Runjit Singh in 1832 as colonel of artillery, passing into that of Gulab Singh when he became independent Sovereign of Jamu and Kashmir. We saw him head the troops at the Maharajah's weekly review, held after the manner of the "Salamlik" parade at Constantinople. I had a long conversation with him twenty years afterwards in Kashmir, when on my way to Central Asia with the Kashgar Mission, regarding trans-frontier countries and affairs which continued to interest him.

The instincts of a hunter, passed down from the long ago occupation for provision of food and clothing, were dormant in me, but circumstances in the days of my early youth were against the gratification of my love of the chase as a pastime. Thus I came to look upon India as a place where I might be able to indulge in field sports, and in this I was not disappointed. When we were making our way up-country on first arriving in India, we found the 18th

[1] The life story of this adventurous "Soldier and Traveller" is well told by Major Hugh Pearse in his book under that title, published by Blackwood & Sons in 1898.

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Royal Irish in camp at Allahabad, awaiting passage to Calcutta by the Ganges river steamers, preparatory to their return to England. The officers were selling their tents, horses, ponies, guns, rifles, and other articles of equipment, and we were able to fit ourselves out with much that we required, at a cost small in comparison with what we should have had to pay to dealers. I became the happy owner of a good pony and a good gun. We had to make frequent halts to allow of our heavy baggage, which was following by the post office bullock train, overtaking us, and during our next stoppage, which was at Cawnpur (January 1851), I was delighted to ride out and try my gun on peafowl and partridge. On the march afterwards I had always blue rock pigeon to wander after, and it was a variety in food to the ever present tough village fowl.

During the Momund expedition on the Peshawar frontier I came across the beautifully marked "seesae," a bird of the partridge kind, in size between the "chikor" (mountain red-leg) and the quail, and bagged many of them. In my eagerness after sport then I incurred censure from the General in command, Sir Colin Campbell, for causing an alarm by shooting wild duck at daybreak on his side of the camp. I had reconnoitred their feeding swamp by day, and arranged with a companion to surprise them at earliest dawn. I explained as I passed the outlying picquet in that direction, and they knew what the firing meant; but not so Sir Colin, whose early rising habits made his hearing too sensitive. He was up and out at once to ascertain what was happening on that side of the camp, for as the duck from other quarters flew over our hiding-places, the firing was repeated as fast as we could use our muzzle-loaders. All was soon made known, and the General sent for Captain Redmond, who commanded the 61st detachment, and directed

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him to forbid any more shooting while in camp there. During the day I sent a couple of wild duck from my morning's bag over to the General's tent with my compliments, which, being kindly accepted, closed the incident. But there was no more shooting for me there.

I bought a single sporting rifle from a brother officer who was going home, and with it got some antelope on the march to Kasauli. This, my first rifle, was a heavy weapon, with much metal in the barrel, and a small bore, very like the Kentucky rifle described by Fenimore Cooper in his well-known novels. It bore the maker's name and address, "Crispin, Cork," and I used to be chaffed about my "cobbler-made rifle." But as time wore on, and I rose to higher pay, better sport, and bigger game, I improved my battery, and extended my hunting fields until they took in ibex, bear, tiger, panther, and antlered deer, and my stable included hog hunters which carried me well up to many a fine fighting boar.

I bought my first horse at Peshawar immediately after the Momund expedition of 1851. The Kabuli dealers, on learning that the English were in permanent possession of the Punjab, came down with larger consignments of horses and goods than they had previously ventured to take through the intervening northern country to India proper; and accordingly a considerable selection of animals was on show in the Peshawar caravanserais. I secured a good-looking Badakhshani horse at a low price, and after much struggling and striving with him, and some painful falls, an understanding was arrived at which made me "master of the horse." I became fond of him, and he always had a welcoming neigh for me. My grief was great when he died almost suddenly from severe colic during the march down-country from Peshawar. This happened at Manikiala, near Jhelum, where Alexander the Great

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lost his favourite charger, Bucephalus, and raised in its honour a massive monument, the ruins of which are still a prominent feature of the place.

The advantage of having passed in Hindustani came to me early, in the offer of the post of interpreter to the 52nd Light Infantry, then about to arrive in India, and to be stationed at Ambala. I met the regiment at Calcutta in October 1853, and accompanied it in the Ganges river steamers to Allahabad, whence we proceeded by route march to Ambala, arriving there in January 1854. My time with the 52nd came to an unexpected close in April 1854, when an officer, holding the interpreter certificate, who had exchanged from another regiment, became available for the post. The hot idle season having then commenced, I obtained six months' leave of absence previous to rejoining my own regiment, the 61st, and formed a party from the 52nd to go to Tibet and Kashmir, arranging to travel by a different route to that which I had followed the previous year. This occupied me till October 1854, when our party broke up, and I rejoined the 61st at Wazirabad, in the Punjab, for regimental and interpreter duty. During this Himalayan trip I had good sport with ibex and "tahr" (both of the goat species), and black and brown bears. I had an adventure then in capturing a young brown bear, which an experienced Himalayan sportsman afterwards said might have left me a miserable object from the tearing grasp of its angry mother. I had gone off by myself for a few days after bears and "tahr," and when pitching my small shelter tent in a secluded glen, a shepherd came running in to say that a brown bear with two cubs was grubbing in a snow-patch quite close. As he urged me to be quick I started with my shikari in such haste, that I merely loaded my gun

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and rifle, and hurried off without spare ammunition. The "stalk" was an easy one, and I was in a fair way to engage the big bear at close quarters with every advantage, when one of the baby bears, in a droll, inquisitive manner, came tumbling down the slope to have a close look at us. This revealed our presence to the mother, who sounded the alarm to her cubs, and made off at a rapid, shambling run. I had two quick shots at her, only one of which, however, took effect, and apparently wounded her but slightly. She then turned back in fear for her cub which was near us, and charged viciously at the shikari, who caught her eye first as he showed himself handing me my rifle. In his excitement he had full-cocked both barrels, and held out the rifle to me with his fingers within the trigger guard; he thus clumsily pressed the triggers and fired both barrels in the air, and, dropping the rifle, ran to save himself. The infuriated bear went straight after him, leaving me to take a line of my own in flight to my tent, carrying my unloaded gun, for I remembered in anguish that I had come out without ammunition. The nimble shikari was able to take care of himself, and the bear, on seeing me, became undecided which of us to follow, stopped to consider, and then turned back to her cubs. The shikari ran for the ammunition, and reloading my gun, we recovered the dropped rifle, loaded it, and went in pursuit of the bear, whose tracks showed her to be bleeding freely from my shot. We sighted her escaping into the forest, with the cubs following some distance behind, and overtaking one of these we tried to catch it, but it eluded us by scrambling up a tall pine tree.

To me, a youth of twenty-two, the chance of rejoining my party with a captured bear was tempting to a degree, and accordingly I determined to

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get the cub. I told the shikari, who was a lithe active fellow, to climb up the tree after it, but the higher he ascended, the higher went the little bear. Before going up he warned me of the danger of the mother bear coming back, and I undertook to defend at the foot of the tree. The shikari at last reached the cub, but it fought so fiercely that he shouted out to me his inability to bring it down. I was so keen to make the capture that I abandoned my post and weapons, and climbed up the tree to assist. By using the long puggrie from my felt hat to throw over and round the cub in folds so as to envelop the head and paws, we managed to handle it safely and carry it to the camp. We soon tamed it with kind treatment and tempting food in the form of bread, milk, and honey. It was carried on our long walking tour to Kashmir, and there came to an untimely end through choking on a lump of half-baked bread which one of the servants had thrown to it. My sportsman acquaintance, who shortly after had this story from me, laughed grimly at what might have been our predicament had the bear come back in search of her cub and followed us up the tree, for there she would have been quite at home, with us at her cruel mercy; and we would have had but a miserable choice of two evils—a bad drop from a perilous height, or a bad mauling from the bear.

When quail-shooting in the late spring of 1855 at Wazirabad, I got a "touch of the sun," which had a bad effect on me all summer; and in order to have the benefit of change, and distraction from the idea that I was suffering from chronic headache, I obtained two months' leave of absence to Kashmir. The hard work of hill walking and climbing gave me back good, sound sleep, and I was enabled to do my duty during the cold season; but on the

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approach of the hot season I was sent home on sick leave in March 1856. The return to England soon made me well, and an autumn in Sutherland and Caithness, where I had good shooting, completed my recovery. Owing to the great Mutiny in India, troops were hurried out there in 1857, and I was ordered to embark in the sailing ship *Roman Emperor*, 800 tons, in command of a draft of volunteers from the 28th to the 61st, the other troops on board being a draft of volunteers from the 18th Royal Irish to the 87th Royal Irish Fusiliers. The accommodation was extremely limited for our numbers, and the ship in every way was uncomfortable. We were bound for Karachi, at the mouth of the Indus, where we arrived after a long and disagreeable voyage of one hundred and forty days without touching land. At Karachi we were hurried over the ship's side into river steamers, which worked up the Indus to Multan with all possible speed. The Mutiny campaign was then in full swing, and a train of camels was in waiting to take us on quickly, each camel carrying two men. It was an unhappy journey for the first few days, the camels being new to the work, and the riders sore and cross. We were far too late for the siege of Delhi, in which the 61st shared, and after halts and delays at the various stations *en route*, I handed over my men at Delhi.

I had written to General Sir Colin Campbell, then Commander-in-Chief in India, and he had asked Sir John Lawrence,[1] who was at that time raising fresh levies in the Punjab, to employ me in one of the new regiments. This resulted in my appointment as Second-in-Command of the 7th Punjab Infantry, on active service near Cawnpur, and I was ordered to join at once. I lost no time in this, doing the whole distance by mail-cart, and the last 130 miles straight

[1] The late Lord Lawrence, G.C.B., Viceroy of India, 1864-68.

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away without stopping except to change horses—a severe form of travelling, as all who journeyed by the old Indian mail-cart will probably remember well. Shortly after joining, I was left in command of two hundred men of the regiment, and a troop of very irregular cavalry, which had been hurriedly raised there, and attached to the 7th for patrol duty. I had but one European officer to assist me. My instructions were to watch the line of the Ganges in my neighbourhood, and prevent the enemy crossing from the direction of Lucknow, which was then being besieged. To carry out these orders it was necessary to secure all the boats which lay on the other side of the river, and from time to time I made raids across, resulting in the capture and destruction of a number of ferry boats, besides cargo craft, largely used for the transport of grain and local produce in times of peace. Many of these were found hauled up the dry side-stream-beds and concealed in the bordering high rushes which, at that season (April-May) being dry and inflammable, made the work of destruction by burning easy and quick. The frequency and success of the raids soon led the people to see that the best protection against loss of their boats was to assist in my object of depriving the enemy of their use, and they accordingly were induced to send all the remaining boats to our side, to be scuttled and sunk under the observation of the river guards.

These operations having attracted considerable attention among the river-bank population on the Oudh side, brought me into communication with a Rajput landowner, named Dhunna Singh, whose people had helped the only two Europeans who escaped the murder and massacre which overtook the unfortunate two hundred Christian people—men, women, and children—in their attempt to escape in boats down the Ganges from Fatehgarh to Cawnpur in June and July the previous year. The fugitives left

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in two parties: the first succeeded in getting away unobserved, and had nearly reached Cawnpur when they were intercepted by the rebels, and taken before the infamous Nana, who ordered them all to be put to death. The flight of the second party was quickly discovered, and being pursued by the mutineers in boats, and fired on from the banks by villagers as they passed, they were soon overtaken and attacked. Some were shot, some were drowned, some were cut down in the water, and some were taken prisoners and carried back to Fatehgarh to be put to death in a cruel manner. Only two escaped, Major Robertson and Mr Churcher, who managed, by clinging to a heavy oar on which they supported themselves in the centre of the stream, to float down with the current until midnight, when they went ashore and hid in a village, where some herdsmen gave them shelter and food. Mr Churcher might have made his escape, but the other, being badly wounded, could not join him in flight, and accordingly he remained with his friend, whom he attended for more than two months until death came mercifully to the relief of the sufferer. With everything in their favour they could only have fled towards Cawnpur, the nearest place held by a British garrison, but they could hardly have succeeded in passing safely through the swarming numbers of the enemy round that station, and had they done so, they would merely have gone to their death at the later massacre there. The delay probably saved the survivor who, on his friend's death, betook himself to the jungle, and reached Cawnpur after it had been retaken from the Nana by General Havelock.

Dhunna Singh naturally remained quiet about the services rendered to these fugitives, though doubtless the fact was well known to his near neighbours; these neighbours, however, were Rajputs, of his own caste and more or less of his own kin, and their united strength was sufficient to prevent any open attack,

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while the insurgents were fully engaged with the British armies then in the field. Fortunately for him the latter were steadily proving their superiority, and on the first opportunity he secretly sent a confidential agent to me to show the paper he held in proof of the services which had been rendered at great risk to himself and his villagers. I then took steps to verify his statement as far as possible, and had a personal meeting with him on the 9th of April. Two days later he again came to see me, accompanied by four other Rajput landowners, representing in all twenty-four large villages of their community, who expressed their readiness to assist with a body of matchlock-men in re-establishing British authority.

On the 13th *idem* Mr George Ricketts[1] of the Civil Service, the Deputy-Commissioner who distinguished himself in opposing the passage of the Sutlej by the Jalandar mutineers on their march to Delhi, and by holding the fort and treasury at Ludiana against them, arrived at my post on his way to join General Walpole's force, which was then proceeding from Lucknow to Rohilkand along the left bank of the Ganges, so as to clear away the enemy, and settle the districts in that part of Oudh. Ricketts had been appointed Commissioner of Budaon in Rohilkand, and had hoped to reach Lucknow in time to accompany Walpole's force. But the force was then too far forward for him to overtake it by travelling from Lucknow, and I proposed to arrange, through Dhunna Singh, for his journey across to the camp when it should reach the rebel fort, Ruiya (a distance of 10 miles from my post), where it was known the enemy, under Nurput Singh, intended to make a stand. Dhunna Singh accordingly sent his scouts out to get the earliest intelligence of the movements of the British force,

[1] Mr George Ricketts, C.B., afterwards a member of the Revenue Board, North-western Provinces, India.

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and its attack on Ruiya, which neither we nor Dhunna Singh nor his warlike friends ever imagined could fail. The fort was small; its strength lay in its thick earthen walls and deep ditch, surrounded by dense bamboo jungle, but, as was generally the case with all such forts, it was not equally strong all round, and there were weak points which admitted of comparatively easy assault. General Walpole had a splendid force, composed of the Highland Brigade (42nd, 79th, and 93rd), the 9th Lancers, a regiment of Punjab cavalry and one of Punjab infantry, two batteries of horse artillery, and some heavy guns and mortars, but he blundered in the most extraordinary manner. He would not take the advantage which such a body of troops gave him. He did not reconnoitre, or at all events he would not listen to those who knew that there were weak points in the defences. He simply sent the Highland Brigade to pierce through the thick jungle and storm the defences at the strongest parts; the result was a heavy loss in officers and men, and a positive repulse, inasmuch as the force was withdrawn from the attack. The enemy evacuated the fort during the night, and retired unmolested.

This took place on the 15th, and with the certain information that the British force was near Ruiya, and the place would be attacked that day, I arranged with Dhunna Singh that we should, under his guidance, start at sunrise the following morning from the opposite bank. We left my post on the Grand Trunk Road some time before daylight, and crossed from the Ganges river picquet, which I strengthened with a few men, to allow of them holding a spot on the other side with a boat in readiness. We were punctually met by Dhunna Singh and six men, all well mounted, and we rode fast for the camp. As we neared it, the two men, who had gone forward for information, came galloping back with the startling news of the British

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repulse, on which we altered our direct course and made for the camp by a circuitous route, so as to reach it from the opposite direction. We then heard the details of the disastrous fight, and Ricketts, on learning that the enemy had retired without being pursued, became rather troubled concerning my return through country in which some of them had dispersed. He asked the General for a small escort of Punjab cavalry to accompany me, but this was refused, while I was ordered to take a despatch for transmission to the Chief of the Staff, then with Army Head-quarters at Cawnpur. Ricketts was told that I would have to return to my post under the same arrangement I had made for the journey over; and this I did. Dhunna Singh knew that the failure to carry Nurput Singh's fort in the attack, and his unmolested retirement, would have a very bad effect in the surrounding districts, as the news would as a matter of course spread with exaggerations, and he had reason to think seriously of his own position, known, as he now was, for his friendly assistance to us. But there was little time to think this out then, for we had to make our return ride to the river post as quickly as possible. We began it slowly so as to keep our horses fairly fresh in event of having to gallop away from danger. We did the distance in good time, however, though we had to lengthen it so as to avoid certain villages which were likely to be hostile to us, and reached our destination safely before sunset.

I wrote to the chief civil authority at Fatehgarh in favour of Dhunna Singh (I had previously brought to notice his protection of the fugitives from Fatehgarh), and I received a reply which was very pleasing to my Rajput friend. Later, when the Chief Commissioner of Oudh was made acquainted with the case, he invited Dhunna Singh to Lucknow to be informed of a substantial reward from Government for his good

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services. But, as was foreseen by the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell, the check at Ruiya had the effect, after Walpole's column had passed, of encouraging renewed boldness on the part of the rebel leaders, and the official recognition of Dhunna Singh's loyalty drew their hostility to him, so that I was not surprised when I received a request from my friend to give him protection at the main post across the river. He came over accompanied by his family and a numerous following, with many cattle and much in the way of household goods. Eventually, when the country became settled, he returned to resume his own, and further to enjoy the fruits of a liberal grant of land which was given to him in reward for friendly help and loyal services.

For intelligence and scouting purposes the local civil authorities had enlisted the services of a number of "Passees," a gipsy tribe who lived on the banks of the river in the shifty manner common to the similar communities of a low order of life, to be found in many parts of India, and all more or less of criminal character. The "Passees" were clever trappers and hunters as well as thieves, and their weapons were the bow and arrow. Assisted and guided by them I was able to cross the broad Ganges and burn and secure almost all the boats that were hidden away along the stretch of front which I had to guard.

On one occasion Mr X., of the Indian Civil Service, and graded as an assistant magistrate, was sent from Cawnpur to muster these men and verify the pay lists made out by the local native officials. Till 1856, the Indian Civil Service had a close system of nomination to enter it, but the new rule of open competition was then instituted which roused much hostile criticism at the time. It was urged that the door would be opened to men who might be disinclined for, and unsuited to, the active life among the people,

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which those of the old school loved to lead. The further argument was used, that the new school were unlikely to be given to field sports, which take the officials out of their formal life, and give them opportunities of observation and experience which the mere reader and stay-at-home student cannot have or appreciate: I had heard these objections to the new system, and certainly my first acquaintance with the "competition wallahs," as the new men were called, made me think poorly of the product. My post was on the Grand Trunk Road, and Mr X. was able to get so far by carriage. He stayed with me the night, and we arranged to visit the several posts where the "Passees" were to be mustered in the morning. I said I would give him a mount for the distance, which was over 6 miles, but he declined, saying he preferred to walk. I explained that this meant 12 miles through bush, rough grass, and heavy sand, and that the sun would be high and hot before we could get back, but he held to his wish to walk: the sun was well up before we were ready to start, and when he saw the horses brought up he asked about their tempers, and showed signs of giving way about the walk. A native officer grasped the situation, and said that perhaps he could get a very quiet pony for the gentleman, and one that had evidently been long on low diet was produced. It was pronounced too quiet, the observation being made by my young brother officer that the most timid rider even could use spurs on it with impunity. We ascertained that it could not possibly be made to move at a pace beyond a walk without them, and Mr X. was induced to put on the spurs which were given him. He sat down to do this, and began seriously to adjust the first one to his *instep*. Here was a want of observation! We put him right, and managed to hustle him and the poor pony along at a jog trot without any mishap, though there was evidence the

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next day that the ride had been sadly discomforting to the rider.

But as a set off to this story, I have to say that my next acquaintance with a "competition wallah" was in the form of one of the most active, energetic, and practical members of the Indian Civil Service I have ever seen. I met him, Mr E., a few months later in the same year, 1858. He was sent forward as "political officer" for a column of troops of all arms operating in the Azimgarh district. I was in command of an advance guard of irregular cavalry, composed of our own regimental troop, which I have previously mentioned, and a party of loyal "remainders" from corps which had disappeared. We were in hot pursuit of the enemy, and for several days my party was some 6 or 7 miles ahead of the column. Mr E. and I were the only Europeans with this advance guard, and we occupied the same tent, for in his haste to join he had out-travelled his camp outfit. He was everywhere in front and flank, accompanied by well-mounted native officials and police, warning the villagers of the approach of the British force, and ordering them to bring in the necessary supplies, assuring them of good treatment and honest payment. At one place a swollen stream, with steep banks and deep mud bottom, and no bridge anywhere near, threatened serious delay to the field guns, but Mr E.'s energy and resource secured a safe crossing by the time the column came up. He had a crowd of villagers at work in a remarkably short time cutting down the stoutest trees, and dragging them to the impassable ford, the bottom of which he raised by a "cordoroy" layer of tree trunks and branches. He finished with ramping the steep banks, and the guns passed without delay. Mr E. eventually rose to be a lieutenant-governor, and when I went from Tehran to India in 1891, and was introduced with other guests on the occasion of an entertainment given by him to

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the Czarewitch (present Emperor of Russia), he said in welcome when I was named, "One of my oldest friends in India." It was on this occasion that the suite of the Imperial guest were alarmed by the sound of an explosion which took place in the room in which we were dining. A bottle of soda water was the innocent cause of the alarm: it happened to burst in a cooling bucket which contained a number of bottles, and the violence of the concussion broke them all simultaneously, producing a loud report, accompanied with a great sound of crashing glass, rather suggestive to the Russian suite of what in their country is an ever-present fear.

Previous to the arrival of Mr E. a European indigo planter (Mr L.), whose house and property had been burnt and destroyed by the rebels, was employed by Government as an assistant commissioner in the civil administration of the district. He was attached to our column of troops to help in obtaining supplies and information. His long residence in the country, and intimate acquaintance with the language and the people, with whom, from the nature of his occupation as a planter, he was brought into close contact, made him at that time a valuable official. He became an honorary member of our Mess, and used to interest us much with his stories of native character. Speaking of the native love of litigation and the popular belief that the native judges invariably "have their price," he told of a popular "Amil," a revenue judge, who had a well-deserved reputation for sound judgment and honest work, and yet received bribes. Litigants always had their presents conveyed to him by sure hands, and after delivering judgment, which as a rule was in strict accordance with law, he would cause the gift from the losing side to be returned with an expression of sympathy and regret that the evidence, as put before him, prevented a favourable decision. As a result,

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both losers and winners of cases in his court regarded him as a good judge and a sincere friend.

Mr L. was, under the circumstances, an excellent "intelligence" officer, and had a large choice of first-rate spies and other sources of information. He said that some of his best "news agents" were Brahmans, whose priestly character and high caste put them above suspicion and secured their safety. But he mentioned a dreadful case of exception to the general immunity which they seemed to enjoy from detection, a case, however, in which he thought he saw treachery on the part of the spy's own caste brethren, similarly engaged like himself in serving the stronger and better paying side. This particular Brahman was most successful in his visits to the rebels' haunts, and most reliable in his reports of their plans and movements. The payments to him were accordingly much higher than to the others, and it was strongly suspected that on his refusal to share equally, they planned his betrayal. He fell into the hands of a party of the enemy who released him after cropping his ears and nose. They marked him as thieves were marked in old times by the loss of their ears, and as women are still maltreated in the East by madly jealous husbands and lovers who cut off the nose to disfigure the face. As it is an unpardonable sin to shed the blood of a Brahman, a sin which carries with it eternal torment, no one but a Brahman would have consented to use the executioner's knife in this case, and Mr L. therefore attributed the deed to the spy's caste brethren.

I liked the look of the men of the 7th Punjab Infantry at first sight. They were a fine fighting lot of Sikhs, Pathans, Dogras, and others, with some first-rate native commissioned and non-commissioned officers. It was the first of the new corps raised by Sir John Lawrence in the Punjab, to replace those of the old Bengal army which had mutinied, and was

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formed from two existing battalions of military police, largely composed of old soldiers of Ranjit Singh's well-trained army. One of these battalions had been in the Sikh service, and was stationed on the Afghan frontier when the second Punjab war broke out in 1848. It remained on duty there during the campaign which resulted in the defeat and disbandment of the Sikh army, and on the annexation of the Punjab to India being proclaimed, the whole corps entered the British service, and became the Amritsur Police battalion, retaining its distinctive name "Sher-Dil," by which it was popularly known in the Sikh army. The Kangra Police battalion, raised by Captain Nicholson (the famous brigadier-general who was killed at Delhi), gave the other half of the new 7th Punjab Infantry, and it was therefore no matter of surprise that the regiment, which adopted the name "Sher-Dil" (Lion-Heart), always made its mark in action. The men, besides having the musket and bayonet, carried the native tulwar, a curved sword with a keen cutting edge, which they slung with a short loop attached to the scabbard over the left arm close under the shoulder, hilt to the front. They rarely used the bayonet, regarding it generally as a parade weapon, and almost always, when fighting at close quarters, grasped the musket with the left hand, and drew their tulwars.

The complement of British officers was four, consisting of a commandant, second-in-command, adjutant, and duty officer. These were all mounted for parade duties, and as I had joined with but the usual subaltern's pony, the "poor man's friend" as it was often called from being always ready for the work of two horses, I had to look about at once for what might be rated as a "charger." Luck threw a first-class one in my way shortly after, and my "khaki" coloured pony (he was a dun with a black stripe along his back from withers to tail) helped me greatly to get it. When

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MY *FIRST* CHARGER, "GREYSAND,"
A capture in war, March 1858.

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visiting one of the river front outposts, some of the Passee scouts attached to it reported having seen a small mounted party of the enemy shortly after day-break enter a stretch of sand hills and bush jungle about 4 miles off, with the evident intention of hiding there during the day. Taking six troopers from the outpost, and some of the nimble-footed scouts who said they could find good refuge for themselves, if necessary, in the rough jungle ground which they knew well, I proceeded to reconnoitre, and soon came upon the party. We found them, however, prepared for flight, and they escaped before we could close upon them; but we pressed them in pursuit as far as was safe (for we were aware of a number of the enemy being in the immediate neighbourhood), and forced them to abandon two led horses and a baggage pony, which we secured. One of these horses was a fine dapple-grey Arab, 14.2 in height, six years old, sound in wind and limb, and showing signs of having been well cared for in a good stable. The escort, seeing how keen I and my pony had been in the capture, suggested that the Arab would suit me, and I divided the spoil by taking it and giving them the baggage pony and the other horse, with Rs.120 from myself. This Arab proved to be a horse of high quality, and soon became a steady charger. He also turned out to be an excellent hunter, and afterwards carried me well when we were in a hog-hunting country.

I worked hard at my new post, and I was glad to receive a letter from the Brigade-Major to Brigadier-General Seaton,[1] who commanded the district, informing me of a favourable report to the Chief of the Staff (my early friend, Major Mansfield of the 53rd). In June, when the hot winds were in full blast, I was suddenly ordered to rejoin regimental head-quarters with my

[1] The late Major-General Sir Thomas Seaton, K.C.B.

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detachment, and we marched for Allahabad, to join a fresh force which was being assembled there to retrieve a reverse that had happened to our arms in Southern Oudh. The extreme heat of the weather then was dangerous to European troops, and it was desired to spare them as much as possible. Native troops were therefore to be pushed forward, with the Europeans held in reserve. My commandant, Captain Stafford, being taken seriously ill on the march at this time, was left at Cawnpur, and I succeeded to the command.

The railway had been made from Allahabad to Fatehpur, a distance of 50 miles (half-way to Cawnpur), and on arrival there, we received orders to proceed by rail at once, taking light kits and all our ammunition, and leaving the camp and heavy baggage to follow by road. It was when then railing down, that the incident occurred which was mentioned by Russell of the *Times* in his book, of a sepoy being thrown out of a carriage by his comrades to save the train from being blown up. The ammunition boxes were packed under the seats and generally in the carriages, there being no closed van for the purpose, and as many of our men still wore their old cotton wadded clothing (ragged and inflammable) accidental setting on fire was easy, for wood fuel being used on the engines, sparks flew plentifully about the train. The rail journey was done by day, and the heat was intense. The men were drowsy after a long night-march, and more or less asleep; a spark had lighted the torn wadded clothing of one of the sleepers, and smouldered into much smoke, which awoke some of the men, who roused all the others, with a shout of fear and alarm on account of the ammunition, and without more ado they opened the carriage door, and pushed their comrade out. We, the officers and the Traffic Superintendent who was in charge, were in a carriage near the end of the train,

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and as the sepoy was seen to roll down an embankment, the engine driver was communicated with, and the train was stopped. The doctor and I ran back some distance and found the man recovering consciousness; we tore off his burning tunic, and he soon was able to walk up to the train, which had been backed to where we were, very little the worse for his fall.

We joined Brigadier-General Berkeley's force on 11th July, and on the 14th the entrenched position of the fort and village of Dehayn, strongly held by the enemy, was attacked, the 7th Punjab Infantry covering the advance. General Berkeley was a late arrival in India, and had a poor opinion of native soldiers, which, however, he changed considerably after the capture of the enemy's position that day. On finding that his heavy guns were producing little effect, he consulted me as to direct assault, asking if I thought my men could be relied on for it. They were then lying down in partial cover about 300 yards from the edge of the jungle which concealed the enemy's position, and expressing their opinion as to what should be done by a subdued cry of "Hulla, hulla!" (Charge! charge!) I drew the General's attention to this fine sign of spirited impatience, on which he gave the order, and away we went in full cry. Some swarmed through and over the surrounding defences, led by Lieutenant Baillie, adjutant and temporary second-in-command, and many, with whom I found myself, tumbled into the covered (sunken) way among a crowd of the enemy running from the village and outer works into the inner fort, and dashing for the half-open wicket gate, we seized and held it for our infantry swordsmen to form up and charge inside. As we passed along the covered way there was fierce sword-play with a struggling mob of the enemy, hurrying in such anxiety to reach the fort that they had neither time nor thought to turn and

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fight. About two hundred and fifty of the enemy were killed inside, and as many more fell outside the position. The success was most complete, and I was told that my services would be specially noted. Part of the enemy's loss within the position was caused by the premature explosion of a mine, which had been prepared for our reception in event of successful assault. We afterwards heard that the suddenness of our attack had disturbed deliberate action in the final arrangements, and the prime movers in the plan, being maddened by drugs, fired the train before all the garrison had time to find shelter in the ditch, as had been proposed. This accounted for a great number of the defenders being sent up into the air instead of ourselves. The explosion took place just as we entered, and fortunately before we had penetrated far enough to suffer from it. The shock brought us all to a standstill, and caused a grim silence for a minute or two, for we were uncertain of what might follow. The sound of falling *débris* and strange fragments which had been blown upwards broke the silence, and then came the voices of our men through the dense dust and smoke calling to one another by name, and asking in their own way what was "up." This was quickly followed by search at the sword's point for the panic-stricken enemy. The sight of a scorched mass of men who had been caught in the explosion accounted for the fear of those who had escaped that form of death, merely to fall under another.

It was immense luck for me, a subaltern of eight years' service, and twenty-six years of age, to fall into command at that time. It was a repetition in some degree of my father's good fortune, when he, as a subaltern (2nd Queen's) at the same age and length of service, fell into command of the 24th Portuguese Caçadores at the assault and capture of San Sebastian in 1813. He was one of the party of officers

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detached from the British army in Spain for superior employment with the Portuguese contingent, which rendered excellent service under Wellington, and accompanied his army over the Pyrenees into France.

On 16th July, two days after the capture of Dehayn, the 7th Punjab Infantry, under my command, were again engaged doing hot and hard work at the attack and capture of the Tiraul fort, and we received, as on the former occasion, the best mention in Brigadier-General Berkeley's despatches. From that time till the end of May 1859, the regiment was continuously employed on active service in the Azimgarh, Faizabad, and Gorakhpur districts, and on the Nepal frontier, the last engagement being under General Sir Hope Grant,[1] in that month. My name was mentioned five times in published despatches for services in the field, twice as commanding the 7th Punjab Infantry in action, and three times as second-in-command, and I may anticipate here in saying that in reward I was, in the end of that year (1859), promoted to Captain in the 25th King's Own Borderers, and later to Brevet-Major in the Army.

After twenty months' campaigning, the 7th Punjab Infantry was sent back to the northern province, and as my services had only been lent to the regiment for the compaign, I was ordered to rejoin the 61st Foot, which in the meantime had proceeded from Bombay to the Mauritius. I was sorry to say good-bye to the Sher Dil battalion of Punjabi soldiers, for by their gallantry in the field they had helped me well on the way to promotion. And amongst other things, I said at parting that I would never forget the fidelity which a party of them had displayed towards Baillie the adjutant and myself, when on one occasion we were cut off by the enemy and they were urged to save themselves by deserting us. The incident alluded to

[1] The late General Sir J. Hope Grant, G.C.B.

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happened in this way. After our successful action under Brigadier-General Kelly[1] at Butwul, on the Nepal frontier, on 25th March 1859, a large body of mutineers and rebels, with elephants, camels, horses, and light bullock carts, were driven into the low hills, and an attack on them was made three days later. I was in command of two weak companies in the skirmishing line, and Baillie was in support with other two. We covered the advance of the right column, composed of two regiments of infantry, which had to deal with over five thousand of the enemy: we started before daybreak, and pushing our way through 4 miles of jungle, at earliest dawn met two deserters from the enemy, who had belonged to the 40th Bengal Infantry, which mutinied at Dinapur. They told me of a cavalry picquet being quite close, the men of which, they said, were fast asleep as they passed; and they found themselves forced to prove the truth of this statement by guiding us there. They also told me that the main body of the enemy were just behind a low, rocky ridge above the picquet. We came upon the picquet of six men, exactly as told, and they were all killed. One of them had his son with him, a boy about eight years old, who escaped being hurt in any way, and was taken care of by the regiment. We rushed the ridge above without opposition, and found an extensive bivouac below, swarming into movement with all the signs of wild alarm. It was a great confused mass of men and horses, with elephants, camels, and bullocks. There was heavy firing from above and below; we were in excellent cover, but there was no shelter for the enemy, and they broke at once for the jungle up the gorge. The supporting companies closed up, and we moved down to make way for the main body of our column, which we believed to be following. But

[1] The late General Sir Richard D. Kelly, K.C.B.

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it turned out otherwise. They had taken a line to our right, and were toiling up an elevated spur, which no doubt commanded the gorge we were in with the enemy, but the cover was too dense to allow them a clear view, so as to distinguish friend from foe.

Our men were first-rate fighters, but desperate plunderers, and the sight of the "loot" was too tempting to keep them to the fighting business in front. The enemy, on recovering from their first sudden alarm, and discovering that they far outnumbered us, came back in strength, and caught us with our men dispersed after plunder. Baillie and I decided at once to make for a detached mass of rock in front, and calling upon all who were near to follow, we ran for it with a party of forty. Baillie got on the top first, and when in the act of stooping down to give me a pull up, he was hit in the head with a bullet, and fell on top of me, both of us rolling down. There was a shout of "Both the English officers are killed," followed by a bit of a stampede. I rose at once, and used strong language against those who ran, to show how very much alive I was, on which three native officers who were of the party said, "We remain with you, and will make a stand." We got the men together, lifted up Baillie (dead, as we thought) on the rock shelter, and then disposed ourselves for defence. We were forty in all, including Baillie, myself, three native officers, and a bugler. We had to lie very low, for we were under a close, heavy fire. The enemy were all round us, and established themselves between our rock shelter and the supports sent from the main body, when the exact position was observed and understood. Their buglers (mutineers) were sounding incessantly all our calls, and so trying to bewilder our troops. My only chance of informing our side was by the regimental call, and this the bugler did by lying on his back and sounding his loudest and

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shrillest. During a lull in the firing, the mutineer sepoys, who completely surrounded us, began calling to our men to save themselves by leaving the Sahibs, on which there was some awfully bad language from our rock, language which, under the circumstances, however, was good to hear, as it assured me that the men were steady and staunch.

While this was going on, Baillie, who I thought was dead from a bullet through his head, stretched out his hand and took mine, saying, "Gordon?" and again swooned. I then found that the bullet had been turned by the puggerie on his forage cap, and, cutting the temple, had ploughed round the back of his skull, also cutting the opposite temple, thus presenting all the appearance of having passed right through the head. At the same time I became aware of a tall Pathan jemadar (native lieutenant), a real tower of strength, having sunk down beside me insensible, and I ascertained that he had a bullet clean through his body, below the belt. He had said nothing about it at first, and kept on encouraging the men for some time before he fainted and fell. As the succouring party from our troops slowly approached through the heavy jungle, their fire, directed at the enemy between us and them, sent their bullets whistling and singing over and about our position in a very disturbing manner, and I accordingly offered to have any sepoy made a corporal who would find his way round their flank, and communicate with them. A long, lanky Sikh said he would try, and divesting himself of his brown belts and what was likely to betray him, stole off; but he soon returned saying we were cut off, and it was impossible to get through. Then a quiet-looking Kangra Rajput said he would make the attempt, and away he went, more carefully disguised. He returned to say that he had not been able to communicate, but he could take us down a side ravine

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that seemed to offer a way of escape. Then, carrying the dead and supporting the wounded, we stole away as quietly as possible until we came to a safe shouting spot on the flank, whence we reached our own people. The dispersed skirmishers and supports had reassembled, and, with a reinforcement coming up from the reserve, I returned to the attack, and my men had their revenge. Baillie recovered from his severe wound, and is alive and hearty still. The Pathan jemadar, by name, Ahmadjee, was saved, the doctor said, by having a comparatively empty stomach at the time, and he lived many years in enjoyment of a good pension. He and the other two native officers received the Order of Merit for their gallant conduct in standing by us and keeping the men together. This "Order" is a very substantial reward, as it carries with it the grant of one-third of the recipient's pay, which also accompanies the retiring pension.

I have mentioned that the men of the 7th Punjab Infantry were desperate plunderers, and there could be no doubt that they sometimes carried on their operations in a ruthless manner, when any of the enemy who fell into their hands resisted search for the valuables carried on the person. The custom of "quarter" was little known or observed during the Mutiny War, except when a British officer happened to be present, and was moved to prevent slaughter; and even then, the lust of gold sometimes led to the lust of blood on resistance to personal search being made. Once at close fighting I saw one of the enemy throw up his arms and fall forward over a slab of rock, letting his long hair loose at the same time to show that he was a Sikh, as he also revealed himself to be when he called out for "quarter," saying that he had been a sepoy in one of the revolted regiments and was compelled to join in mutiny. I told a native officer who was with me to see that his life was spared until his case could be

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considered, and then rushed on with the advancing ranks. During a check immediately after, I heard a disturbance behind, and on looking back saw flashing tulwars at work among a bunch of the men, but my attention being then drawn to the front, the matter fled from my mind for the time. Afterwards, on returning over the same ground, I saw the native officer pick up a small mauve-coloured velvet bag, and remembering the surrendered Sikh, I asked about him, and was told the story of his little velvet bag. It was that he had fiercely resisted the taking of the bag, which contained gold, from his waistband, whereupon the searchers slew him and divided the spoil. I remarked on the pity of it, but the Sikh subadar muttered that for fighting against the "Sirkar" (Government) and his own brethren, he had got a better death than he deserved—death by the sword instead of the rope, or with his back to the mouth of a gun.

When we were campaigning in the Faizabad district (1858-59), we found capital hog-hunting ground, and had excellent sport. We were then with a force of all arms, and good fields used to turn out. The Punjab infantry had a pack of dogs which followed the regiment for the food regularly thrown to them by the company cooks, and it was observed that only the fittest survived the long wanderings from place to place. Either local attractions took many away, or the weaker were driven off by the stronger. We made them into a pack to assist in our hog-spearing sport, and having strong hunting instincts, they soon learnt to go for the boars, when they refused to be driven out of their coverts by the usual shouting and "tom-tom" disturbance. At one of our "meets" I had a valuable Arab horse cut down by an active boar, which came for me in full charge, made little of being met by my spear in the shoulder, and as my horse went over him, or rather as he passed under the horse, cut his foreleg from the

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fetlock up, and caught him near the stifle with a terrible upward stroke of his great tusks. We were all in a heap as it were, and the boar, fortunately for me, was killed by one of the other "spears" before he could do more damage. My horse could not be moved beyond a village which was quite near, and there he was stabled under a thatch. I sold him the next day for a third of his value to the veterinary surgeon of a cavalry regiment, as we were under orders to march elsewhere at once. The horse recovered, and afterwards was again wounded in a boar charge, his rider telling me that his first fight appeared to have had the effect of stimulating his love of the dangerous sport.

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CHAPTER II

(1859-1865)

I EMBARKED at Calcutta in the end of August for Port Louis, Mauritius, on board the sailing ship *Ceres*, in company with my old regimental friend, Captain Dudgeon, who, like myself, had been detached for special duty during the campaign. The *Ceres* was manned by a lascar crew under English officers, supplemented by three European petty officers as boatswain, carpenter, and sailmaker, and was engaged under Government supervision to carry over three hundred indentured Indian coolies for the Mauritius sugar plantations. We reached Port Louis in thirty-four days, but had to undergo eight days' quarantine, which was performed on board, in the harbour outer anchorage.

Dudgeon and I were the only passengers in the *Ceres*, and we had a dull voyage, for the captain and his officers were not cheerful company. The ship was an ocean tramp, run on the most economical lines, and as usual in such cases, the captain's best services were secured by a share of the profits. With a sharp eye for economies he had observed during the first few days of the voyage that there was a great waste of the biscuits and sugar which formed part of the coolies' liberal rations, and he proceeded to reduce the daily amount issued. But the waste had been due to sea-sickness, and when the suffering decreased, appetites increased. In reply to

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representation made by coolie spokesmen, the captain said that he would sanction the full issue when he saw there was likely to be no waste. Some of the coolies were veritable sea lawyers, and pressed the claim for their rights in an able manner, stating that the captain had no discretion in the matter. He, however, was too keen on making gains, and the doctor too complacent, to allow of a fair hearing. At last a deputation came on the poop, when Dudgeon and I were there with the captain, and formally addressed their complaint to us as Government officers, pretending to believe that we were on board to see fair play to them. We assured them that we were merely passengers, and they then addressed themselves to the captain, asking me to interpret for them, which I did. The captain refused their petition in a peremptory manner, on which one of their number suddenly ran to the stern of the vessel, got on the taffrail, and shouted his determination to jump overboard and die, unless their just claim was allowed. Knowing how Orientals could in sudden frenzy sacrifice themselves in order to draw attention to unredressed grievances, I advised the captain to give what they were entitled to, and the matter was so settled.

This disappointment put the captain into a very bad temper, which was further aggravated by the south-east trade wind, an 11-knot breeze which was serving our course well failing at that time, and leaving the ship almost becalmed. The amount of his share of profits depended upon a quick run, as the passage and provision contract was a lump sum for the whole voyage. The second mate was made to feel the rough side of his temper more than any one else. The captain seemed to us from the first to have a particular dislike to him, and as he was a quiet, inoffensive young fellow, Dudgeon and I showed in an unobtrusive manner that we felt for him. This, however, only inflamed the skipper's

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arbitrary disposition, and made matters worse for the mate, ending in his being placed in "irons," on a false charge of mutiny, and kept a close prisoner for eighteen days.

The circumstance which precipitated this cruel treatment and injustice occurred on the poop-deck just after daybreak, in the presence of the sailmaker and myself. There were a few lascars about cleaning decks, and a Manilla man at the wheel, but they pretended not to see what took place. I had gone early on deck, as was my habit, to avoid the heavy malodorous air which found its way into the cabins when the mass of humanity between decks unrolled itself in the morning. "Sails," the English sailmaker, was also a very early riser, and was at his usual place by the stern, busy with his mending and making. The second mate had the watch, and the skipper, coming on deck to find the ship making little way, proceeded to find fault freely and ordered him in the most vexatious manner to do trivial things over and over again under the pretence of imparting instruction. While this was going on he kept pulling and pushing the mate roughly aside, so that he should get out of his way when he desired to show how he considered certain things were to be done. The too evident intention was to humiliate and provoke to the utmost. He was a man of powerful physique, and had an exaggerated opinion of his skill as a "bruiser," as well as of his autocratic position as a captain on the high seas. The mate was of lighter build, but of active, sinewy, well-knit figure. The breaking point of endurance of the slights inflicted by the captain came with an order to range the hand-buckets in their fixings by the poop head-rail, as the lascars brought them up when deck-washing was finished. He evidently wished the lascars to look on and see the mate do their work. The mate obeyed by placing one or two of the buckets to show how it

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was to be done, and told the lascars to carry on accordingly. The captain on this seized the mate by the back of the neck and held him down to the work, shouting out in violent language his order to obey as directed. The mate shook himself free, and said he would not be rough-handled in that way, on which the captain burst into a torrent of abuse, caught hold of him by the throat, and swore he would make him obey. Again the mate shook him off, and then the skipper, giving way to uncontrollable rage, struck him savagely in the face, and the fight began. The sailmaker went forward and asked them to desist, but the captain's blood was up, and he gruffly told the sailmaker to mind his own business. So Sails went back to his work by the stern, and I sat near and watched the fight.

After the first encounter, the captain, when warning off the sailmaker, prepared for action by removing his jacket, and the mate followed his example as he saw that the powerful captain meant to do his worst on him. They then stood up to one another in fighting fashion, and hit hard. We soon saw that the captain was getting the worst of it; as his antagonist had much the advantage of him in quickness, he went down several times, the mate standing by, ready to knock off or go on as the captain might choose. They fought on doggedly and in silence, but at last the skipper, finding he was being badly beaten, meanly sought refuge in his position as captain, and shouted, "Mutiny, mutiny! Call the first officer and the carpenter"; and when they came he ordered them to conduct the second mate to his, the captain's, cabin as a prisoner. The carpenter in those ships generally acts as constable on board, and has in his charge the "irons," that is, the handcuffs and leg fetters for refractory and violent prisoners. He was told to fetch these, and I followed the party down below to see or hear the further proceed-

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ings. The captain's cabin door was open, and, sitting on the saloon table, I saw the mate, with his escort, standing, while the skipper sat and made a garbled statement of the affair, accusing the mate of open mutiny, accompanied with violence, and ordered him to be handcuffed and confined to his cabin until he could be taken before a magistrate at Port Louis, whither the ship was bound. The mate denied the charge, and asserted his innocence, saying that Lieutenant Gordon and the sailmaker were witnesses. When the handcuffs were fastened on the mate, the sight of his helplessness seemed to rouse the cowardly captain to further fury, for he threw him backwards over a sea-chest, and seizing him by the throat would certainly have choked him to death, had he not been pulled off by main force. Then, roaring of mutiny and violence, he ordered the leg fetters to be put on.

I told the captain as quietly as I could that all this severity was uncalled for, and Dudgeon, who had come out of his cabin on hearing the uproar, supported my request for humane treatment. The first officer and the carpenter looked ashamed, but they naturally said nothing, as the traditions of the autocracy of a ship captain almost enforce silence. The mate was ordered to his cabin, but being dazed by the captain's violence he passed it when walking, shackled, down the saloon. The captain seeing this could not restrain himself, and, again shouting out his order to go to his cabin, rushed forward and struck him a heavy blow on the back of the head. The mate, maddened by this further cowardly attack, turned sharply round, raised his manacled hands high, and brought them down with great force, meaning to brain his assailant. Fortunately for him the captain drew back his head, but the bar of the handcuffs caught his face, scoring it badly from the brow to the chin, and making him an ugly sight. His howls of rage

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were changed in an instant to screams of pain, and he ran to his cabin, calling out for the doctor, from whose hands he eventually came forth with a face grotesquely disfigured by a network of sticking plaster. He afterwards spoke to me threateningly as to my expression of opinion regarding his conduct, and said that he had powers which extended to me while I was on board his ship. I warned him to be careful, and requested him never to speak to me again except from official necessity. He afterwards tried occasionally to induce me to break this rule of silence, but I would not meet his advances during the whole time the mate was kept in close confinement. The doctor had managed by strong remonstrances to get the irons removed, but the captain, in the vain hope of some chance from the chapter of accidents coming to his assistance, adhered to his charge of mutiny and order of close confinement, and so he led himself on to the discomfiture which overtook him in Port Louis.

When our period of quarantine ended, the Port Health Officer came off to make a final inspection of every one on board, and on the captain stating in answer to the enquiry that all were on deck, I, seeing that the mate was not among them, told the Health Officer in the captain's presence that there was one absent. The Health Officer angrily refused to accept the explanation offered by the captain, and declined to proceed with his duty until the mate was brought on deck. His appearance was sufficient to suggest suspicion of sickness, but the story of his close confinement accounted for it, and he then had the consolation of hearing that his case would be brought to notice. In short, the whole affair was made known in the Magistrates' Court, where I attended as a witness for the mate, on the captain finding that it was necessary he should prefer his charge of mutiny against him. The first evidence demanded by the magistrate was the ship's

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log, and on seeing that no entry of the occurrence had been made at the time, he dismissed the charge. Then a counter charge was brought by the mate, which ended in a settlement being made out of court. The ship's agents arranged for a liberal payment as compensation, a satisfactory certificate, and a home passage to the mate, who called upon me afterwards to thank me for my assistance, and to say good-bye. The accident of my presence on deck when the fight came off saved him, for otherwise the sailmaker's silence was safe enough, the captain would have been believed, the log entry would have been made, and the mate would have been broken for mutiny. And thus there was one case the less of the many instances of unatoned tyranny and injustice which happen on the high seas at the hands of captains unfitted to wield autocratic power.

My stay in the Mauritius was very pleasant, and I made many excursions to various parts of the island to see its picturesque scenery. In my boyhood I had found interest in the romantic story of the life, love, and death of Paul and Virginia, and I renewed that interest by a visit to their graves at Pampel-Mousse, near Port Louis. I obtained six months' leave of absence to England, and embarked on 8th January 1860 on board the P. & O. steamer *Malta*, to go home by Aden and Suez, paying £92 for my passage. In those days the P. & O. Company ran a monthly steamer *vid* Mauritius to Australia, touching at King George's Sound. We reached Aden on the 17th, and I then saw in a newspaper that I had been promoted to Captain in the 2nd Battalion 25th Foot on 13th December 1859. I also saw my twin brother's promotion to Captain in his own regiment, the 29th, in the same gazette, and, strange to say, both regiments were at the same station in England, viz., Preston. Had the news of my promotion reached me in the

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Mauritius I would have been £92 richer, for my passage home would have been paid by Government. I tried in vain afterwards to find a sympathetic soul in the War Office to consider favourably my request for a return of the money I had paid.

I rose to Captain in ten years without paying for any of my commissions. In this I was particularly lucky in those "purchase" days, when a man with money could buy promotion over one without that qualification. The system had many objections, though it was urged in its favour that it had its advantages for the officer without means, inasmuch that it quickened promotion generally, and in the course, sooner or later, of its moving power, put him at the head of the list, ready to benefit by any casualty giving advancement to the next grade without payment. If I benefited in any way by this system, the benefit was very much disguised, and at the time of its active operation in enabling a junior to trample over me to the higher grade, it had a very depressing and mortifying effect. I was an ensign for over four years, and in that time I was "purchased" over three times. My young life had been a hard one, and that gave me the patience and perseverance which eventually served me well. I was a lieutenant for six years, and it was by the good fortune of my field service with the 7th Punjab Infantry that I was promoted to Captain "without purchase," for I was taken from the position of third from the top of the Lieutenants' List in the 61st, to be Captain in the 25th.

I longed to go back to India for special service, and exchanged into the 95th (Derbyshire) Regiment serving in the Bombay Presidency. I left London in August 1860, reached Bombay in September, and went to Poona, where I spent a month very pleasantly as the guest of my cousin, Mr Henry Coke, employed in the Education Department under the Bombay Government. My early friend in the 53rd, Major William Rose

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Mansfield, now General Sir William, was then Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, with Solly Flood as his aide-de-camp (later Military Secretary), and they showed pleasure at meeting me again. I bought two good Arabs at Poona, which I named "Cavalier" and "Sher-dil," and joined the 95th at Neemuch, ready for any hog-hunting there might be a chance of having there. The regiment was then moving down to Poona by wings, and came together there in the end of March. Colonel the Hon. Frederick Thesiger[1] was in command, but some months later he was relieved by Colonel Julius Raines,[2] the senior lieutenant-colonel, on his return from leave in England (regiments had two lieutenant-colonels in those days). During my regimental service under Colonel Thesiger, a friendship was formed between us which produced for me on several occasions most kind and valuable assistance.

Poona was then a great centre of hog-hunting, or, as more generally called, pig-sticking, and the "Poona Hunt" was next to the "Calcutta Hunt," the oldest sporting institution in India. Hallen, the master, was leaving Poona, and I was asked to take his place. I accepted, and threw much energy into my management, getting new members from the 95th, and bringing the total number up to thirty-five. The subscriptions were heavily in arrear, but by dint of constant "dunning" I got all in, and was able to arrange for a good and well-provided Mess—a great desideratum, as people are always ready to join such institutions when the commissariat organisation is in smooth and satisfactory working order. We had many rattling runs and very successful gatherings. In following this sport it is generally found that a boar can run over rough ground for a mile on equal terms with

[1] The late General Lord Chelmsford, G.C.B., G.C.V.O.

[2] Lieutenant-General Sir Julius A. Raines, K.C.B.

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the best horse; and thus I discovered that my Arab, Cavalier, had a good turn of speed. Thereupon I ran him in the "Garrison Derby" at the Western India Race Meeting, Poona, September 1861, and in the General Handicap at the close of the meeting. He was second in the first, and first in the second of these races, and paid his expenses.

I had returned as soon as possible to India with the express object of being reappointed to the Punjab infantry, in which I had made a good start in 1858. The Bengal army was then being reorganised, and I was anxious to be in time for a post in it as regimental second-in-command or commandant. It was necessary that an officer of the British forces who desired to join the Indian army should, in addition to possessing certain qualifications, be on the establishment of a British regiment or battery serving in India, and for this reason I had exchanged from the 25th Foot at home to the 95th in Bombay. Sir William Mansfield, as Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Presidency, forwarded my application to His Excellency Sir Hugh Rose, Commander-in-Chief in India, with his strong recommendation, and accordingly I was very sanguine of success. But my disappointment was intense when the following short reply was received from the Military Secretary, between two and three months later:—

"19*th June* 1861.—I regret to say that circumstances prevented an earlier reply to Your Excellency's letter of the 9th of April, and now beg to state that Sir Hugh Rose is much obliged to Your Excellency for recommending to his notice so good an officer as Captain Gordon of the 95th Foot, whose services are the more valuable because they were performed under your own observation."

The irony of this answer completely killed all my hopes in that direction. It was a remarkable letter, revealing as it did the survival of some personal

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feeling connected with the after events of the Mutiny campaigns. Sir William Mansfield was too able a public man not to have enemies, and in his position as Chief of the Staff of a great army, he doubtless was sometimes blamed for disappointments which were not of his doing. But those who were acquainted with Lord Clyde should have known that his judgment was in his own keeping, and was exercised with full independence in all matters that came before him.

In October 1861 I was appointed Staff Officer at Sholapur, a station in the Deccan, where, besides pleasant duty, I had capital sport with gun and hog-spear. About this time I took seriously to the study of Persian, at which I had been working in a desultory manner by myself. The idea of acquiring this language had struck me in Kashmir in 1853, where I happened to meet Major Otter of the 61st, who was Persian interpreter on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief in India, and heard him speaking it. The softness of the tongue took my fancy, and for my second voyage to India round the Cape in a sailing ship I provided myself with Forbes' Persian Grammar, and Sheikh Sadi's Gulistan (Rose-Garden), written in conversational Persian, and I made these my steady study during the long sea journey. I was thus prepared for instruction by a remarkably well-educated Mirza, named Hairat Khan,[1] from Shiraz, whom I met in Poona, and who accompanied me to Sholapur. I passed the test for colloquial proficiency in January 1863, and the full interpreter's examination in January 1864. I was transferred from the 95th to the Indian Staff Corps in 1862, and thenceforward my substantive promotion to Major and Lieutenant-Colonel was regulated by fixed periods of service.

In August 1862 I was moved from the Sholapur

[1] Mirza Hairat afterwards was appointed Oriental Translator to the Government of Bombay.

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post to a superior one at Ahmadnagar, and in October of the same year I was appointed Brigade-Major at Poona, where I resumed the Mastership of the Hunt, and when duty and study (Persian) permitted I enjoyed many well-contested runs for "first spear." At one of the meets a horse was killed in a singularly stupid manner through the unsportsmanlike rashness of one of the riders, who cast his short, weighted spear at a boar, javelin fashion, and missed it. The weighted end swung round, and, hitting the hard ground, rebounded with great force, and caught the horse of a companion, galloping up, straight in the ribs on the offside, just behind the saddle and the rider's leg. The spear penetrated deep, and so injured the horse that it had to be killed.

My staff duties at Poona brought me into contact with two regimental commanding officers who laboured hard to make mountains out of molehills, and to bring into ridicule the institution of trial by court-martial. They were both martinets of a severe type, and had no sense of the sympathetic or amusing side of things. One of them commanded a regiment of British infantry, and on returning from leave of absence to England, he decreed the cessation of wearing beards, a custom which had been permitted during and after the Mutiny campaign. There were two regiments of British infantry in the garrison there, and the commanding officer of the other regiment continued the custom of beards. There was much grumbling in the one regiment, and much laughing in the other. Anonymous letters stated that the men who were ordered to shave would do so willingly and without murmur, in obedience to a general order applicable to all, but objected to the capricious whim of an individual commanding officer. However, they were induced to do as he wanted, and the beards disappeared. But the colonel was not

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satisfied with this success, and proceeded to worry one of the captains on the length of his whiskers, which, he said, when blended together, presented the appearance of a beard. Till that time the captain had possessed a long, silken-like beard, of which he took very great care. This beard was a continuation of equally abundant and well-tended, long "Dundreary" whiskers. In obedience to the colonel's wish he had removed the beard from his chin, but the soft, flowing whiskers fell together in a manner which displeased the regimental autocrat, and the captain was told to correct this. He shortened his whiskers a little, but this only whetted the colonel's desire to see them shorter still. Their difference on the subject ended in the captain being placed under arrest, and an application made for his trial by court-martial. The general officer commanding the Division settled the matter by a little talk with the captain, and a lecture to the colonel, who was also told in diplomatic language that he was sadly wanting in a sense of the ridiculous.

In the other case the officer commanded a regiment of native infantry, and it had been discovered that for twenty-five years past an oral addition to the written standing orders of the native guard at Government House, near Poona, had been communicated regularly from one guard to another, on relief, to the effect that any cat passing out of the front door after dark was to be regarded as His Excellency the Governor, and to be saluted accordingly. The meaning of this was that Sir Robert Grant, Governor of Bombay, had died there in 1838, and on the evening of the day of his death a cat was seen to leave the house by the front door and walk up and down a particular path, as had been the Governor's habit to do, after sunset. A Hindu sentry had observed this, and he mentioned it to others of his faith, who made it a subject of

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superstitious conjecture, the result being that one of the priestly class explained the mystery of the dogma of the transmigration of the soul from one body to another, and interpreted the circumstance to mean that the spirit of the deceased Governor had entered into one of the house pets. It was difficult to fix on a particular one, and it was therefore decided that every cat passing out of the main entrance after dark was to be regarded as the tabernacle of Governor Grant's soul, and to be treated with due respect and the proper honours. This decision was accepted without question by all the native attendants and others belonging to Government House. The whole guard, from sepoy to subadar, fully acquiesced in it, and an oral addition was made to the standing orders that the sentry at the front door would "present arms" to any cat passing out there after dark. The notion was essentially Hindu, yet the Mahomedans and native Christians and Jews (native Jews are to be found in the Bombay army) devoutly assented to it. Dread of the supernatural overcame all religious objections, and every one scrupulously bowed to the heathen decree.

This sepoy guard was a weekly one, furnished alternately by the two native infantry regiments of the garrison. The respective commanding officers at that time were of diametrically different dispositions. The one was of sympathetic temperament and calm judgment; the other impetuous and arbitrary, a rigid disciplinarian, and a severe commander. I and others were at pains to ascertain the truth of the story concerning military honours to the cat, and I mentioned it to both commanding officers, as an interesting subject of wonder at the long continuance of the oral order without it becoming known. The one said he would laugh his native officers out of the idea, the other said he would order them to discontinue the folly, and there would be an end of the absurdity. The latter had

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the fullest belief in his ability to influence his men to dare the demons of darkness rather than openly disobey them. He set his mind firmly on this, and he assembled the native officers and ordered them to refuse to take over, or countenance in any way, the unwritten order regarding the house cat, warning them of the severe court-martial consequences of disobedience. When the first guard furnished by his regiment after this warning returned from the week's duty at Government House, the subadar in command was questioned regarding the oral order. It then came out that his fear of the supernatural was greater than his fear of the stern, uncompromising colonel, and in his awful presence he meekly said, in a few words, that to act as ordered meant to him a life of terror and a death of horror, and having disobeyed, he was ready to lose his highly-prized commission, and the pension reward of his long and faithful service. The colonel insisted on treating the matter as "subversive of good order and military discipline," and placing the subadar in arrest, he prepared an application for his trial by court-martial. To me he said, "I know you will laugh, but my authority must be vindicated." The brigadier took a sympathetic view of the case, ordered the native officer to be released from arrest, and quietly advised the colonel to contend more gently and patiently with simple superstitions.

In March 1864 I was transferred to the superior post of Brigade-Major at Bombay. This meant to me harder work and less chance of sport than at Poona, while the damp climate and moist heat of the place made me feel limp and lazy, very different from what I was in the dry air of Poona and the Deccan. While I was there, the Gaekwar of Baroda's body-guard, dressed as Scottish Highlanders, and wearing a very brilliant fancy tartan and pink tights, became the innocent cause of a disturbance in which the

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police had to act vigorously. The Gaekwar had visited Poona and Bombay in considerable state, and took with him his splendid collection of jewels, which were shown to the public at both places. These were in the special charge of his fancy Highland guard, and while being exhibited at the Town Hall in Bombay, some British merchant sailors began to jeer the coloured Highlanders, and to jostle them in trying to touch their pink tights. Their rough handling led to reprisals, and a crowd of other festive sailors having collected, the guard turned out to protest and protect. In the midst of much shouting and threatening the European police appeared on the scene and restored order. This Gaekwar, ruler of Baroda, was His Highness Mulhar Rao, who afterwards, in 1875, was arraigned before a mixed European and Indian High Commission for gross misgovernment of his State, and attempting to poison the British Resident at his Court. The well-known barrister, Sergeant Ballantyne, was engaged in London for the defence, and went to India for the trial, receiving a fee of £10,000, with payment of all expenses on a very liberal scale. Clever cross-examiner as he was, he acknowledged that he was completely beaten by a Bombay native policeman, who was a witness on the poisoning charge. He said he was the most elusive witness he had ever tackled. The worrying nature of his examination of this policeman, combined with the high temperature of the court-house, gave him an almost real experience of fever heat. He succeeded in some degree with the defence, but His Highness was finally adjudged unfit to rule, and being deposed, was sent to live in luxurious exile at Madras.

My knowledge of Persian helped me well on the occasion of the arrival in Bombay of Her Highness Sikandar Begum, the lady sovereign of the State of

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Bhopal, when she returned from her pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina in 1864. The Government of Bombay instructed me to go on board the special steamer which had been chartered for the Begum Sikandar, and to communicate their congratulations on Her Highness' safe return. I found her on deck, surrounded by her attendants, and in a very disturbed state of mind. I addressed her in Persian, and explaining who I was, communicated the congratulatory message from the Government of Bombay. There was an immediate change in her manner and mood: she conversed pleasantly and freely, and finally asked if I was to accompany her in the railway journey to Bhopal. On hearing from me that another officer would make all the railway arrangements, she expressed herself in a manner complimentary to myself. Before leaving I learnt what had troubled Her Highness before I went on board. She had been in her private state rooms more or less all the voyage from Jeddah, and had not been in the way of being addressed by the captain. But on coming into harbour, the captain, seeing her on deck, had, with the very best intentions, spoken to her in his "Lascar" Hindustani, a patois of the roughest kind and quite impossible for polite conversation. No doubt the personal pronoun "you" was used in a manner to imply the superiority of the speaker to the person addressed, and it was probably the effect on her attendants which the Begum resented. Doubtless, also, the discomforts of the voyage had affected her temper unfavourably. But my efforts in suitably representing what the captain had wished to say were successful in re-establishing him in her good opinion.

This remarkable lady, as Regent of Bhopal during the Mutiny troublous times, rendered specially good service to the British Government, and was

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made ruler of the State. She became Regent in 1844, and was succeeded as Ruling Princess in 1868 by her only child, Shah Jehan Begum, who again was succeeded by her daughter, Sultan Jehan, the present reigning Begum. Thus Bhopal has been ruled by three female sovereigns in succession since 1844, all bearing male names and titles, and all three made the great pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. The first two were *Knights* Grand Commanders of the Star of India, and the present Begum is a *Knight* Grand Commander of the Indian Empire. The second Begum, Shah Jehan, who succeeded in 1868, was the more uniquely distinguished in that, besides belonging to an Order of Knighthood, she was also a Member of the very exclusive Order of the Imperial Crown of India, which is reserved for ladies of the highest rank and position. Bhopal flourishes under its sovereign lady rulers, and is one of the best governed of the Native States of India.

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CHAPTER III

(1865-1872)

General Sir William Mansfield, Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, on being nominated to the chief command in India, kindly offered me the post of Persian Interpreter on his personal staff, and I joined for duty at Simla in May 1865. The period of my staff service with His Excellency (May 1865 to December 1869) was a time of advantage to me in many ways. The duty was pleasant, and gave me favourable opportunities of seeing all parts of the country, and making many friends. The summers were passed in cool, gay Simla, and the winters in camp, and at Calcutta.

Duty and pleasure in those days seemed to go well together hand in hand, and I carry in my memory many happy recollections of that long-ago time. The gaieties of Simla, India's summer capital, were then, as now, stimulated by a constant flow upwards of fresh arrivals thirsting to escape from the deadly dull monotony of torpid life in the hot plains, and ready for every variety of active festivity and cheery change. Even the rigid rule of Eastern habits of thought regarding the ways of the West, relaxed its hold there, as was shown when the Maharajah of Jaipur himself took part in the opening quadrille of a splendid ball which he gave to Simla society. That was the first occasion known to me of a new departure from the influence of

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Eastern ideas, regarding participation in this form of conventional amusement. That same season saw a sensational surprise at a Fancy Dress Ball, when a lady appeared first in a costume of striking simplicity, and then in one of surpassing magnificence. As usual there had been much surmise and supposed secrecy regarding the characters and dresses that would be seen at the ball, but nothing beyond the fact of a dress ordered from Paris was known regarding the costume of the lady in question. Her secret was well kept, and circumstances, added to mystery, led her friends and acquaintances to expect something very beautiful. They looked with much interest and curiosity to her arrival at the ball, and saw with astonishment merely a picturesque figure, lightly attired in soft deer-skin garments, with a leopard skin wrap and dainty moccassins. She was said to be the simple "Minnehaha" (Laughing Water) of Longfellow's *Hiawatha*. As she made the promenade of the ballroom, under the escort of a gallant but shy cavalry officer in full uniform, she encountered the looks of many appearing to say, "Who is she? What is she?" and probably had to listen to half-expressed disappointment from others, who expected to see her in a "lovely dream of a dress" from Paris. She soon withdrew from the room, but only to reappear later as glorious Semiramis, the great Queen of Assyria, and reputed Venus of ancient Babylon. Then the expectations of her lady friends were realised, and the two costumes were seen to be a studied contrast between the Wild West and the Gorgeous East.

I was present at the first of the great Indian Durbars, viz., that held by Lord Lawrence at Agra in 1866, and afterwards at the historic one in 1869, at Ambala, when Lord Mayo received the Amir, Sher Ali Khan, of Kabul and Afghanistan. At both of these great assemblies I was on duty with the Commander-in-

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Chief at many interesting interviews. At Agra, I accompanied Sir William when he called upon the Begum of Bhopal, whom I have mentioned meeting in Bombay on her return from the pilgrimage to Mecca. Her Highness was quick to recognise me, and I was glad to have the opportunity of again speaking to her in the Court tongue. This sovereign lady was well known to the European troops who were on duty in the main street of the Viceroy's splendid camp on ceremonial occasions. While great Rajas and ruling Princes received the "Present arms" salute in a stolid, sleepy fashion, with little or no recognition of it, the keen-looking, energetic Begum stood up in her elephant howdah, and holding on to the front rail with her left hand, returned the salute with her right in a dignified and happy style. During the complimentary call upon one of the principal Rajputana Chiefs, the Commander-in-Chief was asked if he had any sons, and in return, on Sir William asking what sons the Maharajah had, His Highness turned in a lofty sort of disinterested manner to his Vazir, who was standing close behind him, and said, "How many sons have I?" The Vazir, in an attitude of the highest respect and greatest admiration, answered, "Oh, many more than I can count, Great Father of the people." Nothing was asked or said about daughters, as the sex is never mentioned. However that may be, we were then in the place (Agra), where stands the Taj Mahal, peerless among the monuments of the world as the most splendid and lasting token of honour to woman.

At the Ambala Durbar I was deputed by the Commander-in-Chief to call on the Amir every morning, to present his compliments and ask after his health. The Amir always gave me a welcome, and I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him on many subjects. His Highness was much

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impressed with the fine personal appearance of the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Mansfield, and told me they were the best-looking Englishmen he had ever seen. He often alluded to his pleasant recollections of India, when, as a young man of twenty-one, he accompanied his father, the famous Amir Dost Mahomed Khan, in his exile from Kabul, an exile which was a state of honourable absence from his native country. My interviews with Sher Ali were in his informal Court, where he sat with his English visitors, while his Ministers and others stood near or behind him. On these occasions he showed to advantage, his manner being genial and hearty, though the signs of a despotic and cruel will could sometimes be observed.

He showed his severe side very plainly on the occasion of a discussion which he himself had started concerning hostile differences in religion. It was evident that he desired to exhibit his knowledge of the subject as well as his independence in speaking plainly to the dominant race in India, for his people used to refer with contempt to the "servility of the black people," meaning the natives of India. The conversation took place with Sir William Mansfield, and Sher Ali seemed to wish to resent an imaginary idea of the superiority of the English over all Asiatics, including the Afghans. He desired no doubt to impress the ministers and others who were present with his personal independence, and made some sharp remarks on the hostile differences in the Christian Church. Sir William was driven to allude quietly to the great division in Islam between Sunni and Shiah, and asked if there were any of the latter dissenters in Kabul. A cruel look came into the Amir's face as, half-turning towards his people who stood behind him, he said in a tone of fanatical hatred: "Yes, there are some of the dogs there: sons of burnt fathers!" He was always

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complimentary, however, concerning our national character in India, and spoke of our officers as "marvels of honesty." He was ever boastful of the superiority of the Afghans when our native troops were commended, and at the review of the fine force at Ambala, when I drew his attention to the splendid appearance of the 15th Sikhs, he said: "With officers like you to help me, I could show better troops in Kabul."

He was quick enough to see the comic side of things and to make a joke, but his people confined themselves to laughing at his jokes, or pretending to do so, and did not attempt any of their own. With the candour which characterised him in many matters, he amusingly said to Sir William Mansfield, in answer to a complimentary remark on his victories in his hard fight for the throne, that he had only once himself commanded his army in the field, and then had lost the battle, after which he resigned in favour of his son, Yakub, who had military genius. Another story (which I repeat, however, with some hesitation) is told of his sarcastic humour, on observing what he thought was amusement at his expense among a party of ladies who had ridden out at Peshawar to see him make his entry into the station. It was in the morning, and possibly the ladies may not have been in his opinion sufficiently careful in their "get up" and "turn out" for the occasion. Looking towards them, he said to the chief British official who rode with him: "I see you are like us: you keep the pretty ones at home."

To return to Yakub, it was quite true what his father said, and it was chiefly through Yakub's abilities as a leader that Sher Ali gained the throne. And yet Sher Ali was afterwards guilty of the blackest treachery to him. Yakub had been appointed Governor of the distant Herat province, where he exercised great power and increased his influence. Being the eldest son, and

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a capable leader as well as the popular hero, he was by common consent regarded as the heir to the throne. But Sher Ali, relying on his royal prerogative, as known to the Afghans, to appoint as successor the son of his choice, nominated the young Abdullah Jan, his son by a favourite young wife, whose home rule was all powerful. He became blindly wilful and cruel under the influence of this ambitious woman, and he determined, at all hazards, to secure the succession for her boy. He took Abdullah Jan to India for the meeting with Lord Mayo, and the boy was with him on all public occasions. He desired to interest the Government of India in his succession, and to secure their formal recognition of his nomination as heir apparent. This idea was uppermost in his mind on most occasions of diplomatic negotiation. He was aware from the newspapers that Yakub was popular with the English, as with the Afghans, and becoming madly jealous, evil thoughts arose in his mind against him. He saw that Abdullah Jan, if actively opposed by Yakub, could not prevail against him, and the suspicious despot began to imagine that Yakub might even harbour designs against himself. He therefore determined to get him into his power at Kabul, and keep him a close prisoner, well knowing that the ways and means of an Afghan court could secure that Yakub should be rendered incapable of disputing the succession. I have mentioned this as a matter of which I had some knowledge during Sher Ali's visit in 1869, and which afterwards, in the spring of 1874, was the cause of my party, detached from the Kashgar Mission, being stopped and turned back in our return journey to India *viâ* Kabul, when we had reached so far as Kila Panja on the Oxus. I shall refer to this later.

During the long summer residence at Simla, as my duties were light, I had ample leisure to continue my

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study of Persian. While thus interesting myself in Persian literature, I made the acquaintance of the Hon. Mr Whitley Stokes, the Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council (a well-known philologist), who, having been much impressed with the selections from the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam by Edward Fitzgerald and Professor Cowell, then lately published, had succeeded in obtaining two valuable MSS. copies of Khayyam's verses, and was waiting an opportunity to have them translated. He asked me to do this, and after requesting, in vain, the assistance of the President of the Board of Oriental Examiners at Calcutta, I undertook to try my hand and head on the two MSS. In collating them I arrived at a total of about six hundred quatrains, and in the summer of 1866 I commenced the work of translation. I had nearly finished my rough result in the end of the following summer, when I learnt that Mr H. Blochman, M.A., of the Calcutta Madrasah, an Oriental scholar of repute, was engaged in revising, and preparing for publication, a collection of Khayyam's verses from the various MSS. obtainable. We met at Calcutta, and it was arranged that we should work together for the benefit of the Bengal Asiatic Society, he preparing the Persian text, and I, the English translation. Mr Blochman had other translations in hand then, and between these and his college duties, carried on in the enervating climate of Calcutta, progress in our Khayyam work was slow. We had about seven hundred verses to bring out, and had only completed two hundred, with translations and explanatory notes, when changes took place which necessitated our co-operation being suspended for a time. I was hoping to resume the work in 1872, when I went to Simla, but that was unexpectedly prevented by another change, which again was followed by my departure for Central Asia; and during my absence there, my friend Blochman died in Calcutta.

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In March 1876 an article on Omar Khayyam appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, written by Mr H. Schultz Wilson, in which surprise was expressed that with all the opportunities at their disposal, no officer of the Indian army had ever discovered the rare merit and distinction of Omar's *Rubaiyat*; and to this I replied by letter, informing him of what I had done, and had attempted further to do. I also wrote to Mr Edward Fitzgerald, and offered him my complete prose translation, and in answering he recommended me to consult Mr Quaritch. This meant publication, for which I was not prepared. I returned to India and took my translation with me; and as the Omar Khayyam cult began shortly after that to develop a rapid growth of published translations, I became less inclined to add to these, and I have my translation still, stowed away with other proofs of uncompleted labours. I took it with me to Tehran in 1889, and read it there amid Persian surroundings. I then formed the opinion that the great reputation of Omar Khayyam as a poet is Western rather than Eastern, and that he is not nearly so well known nor so popular in Persia as Hafiz. The gay and volatile Persians prefer the reveller to the mystic, and the swing and ring of Hafiz's

> "One more bowl then hither bring.
> Why should Hafiz sorrow?
> In my cups I'll be a King,
> Heedless of to-morrow."[1]

to Omar's tears over the illusions of humanity, and his melancholy gospel of despair. Wine parties no doubt were the nurseries of the intellectual life of the time then—wine was forbidden, but all drank it—and

[1] By Colonel John Biddulph, my companion in travel in Central Asia.

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the same may be said now. Hafiz's *One More Bowl* is the Eastern original of the Western *One Bottle More*—the last bottle, which is always the best. It was then that the invitation to "dine and sleep" was introduced, a custom which continues in Persia to the present day. The Omar Khayyam club in London happily does not follow their "Master" so far on festive occasions. I was favoured with an invitation to dine there a few years ago, when the late Hon. John Hay, Ambassador of the United States, was the guest of the evening, and I was flattered by reading in a Press notice of the occasion:

"The speech of the evening came, as was proper to the occasion, from the guest of the evening, the Hon. John Hay, Ambassador of the United States. Like most of the rest of the audience—save Sir Thomas Gordon, who talked Persian scholarship, and was above the heads of most of his audience—the American Ambassador follows the cult of Fitzgerald rather than that of Omar."

On the way from Calcutta to Umballa in March 1869, the Commander-in-Chief visited Dinapur for inspection purposes, and it was then that I made the acquaintance of Lieutenant R. E. Crompton of the Rifle Brigade, a young genius of engineering talent, who had built a motor-car in the regimental workshops there. The previous Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Rose (afterwards Lord Strathnairn), had taken up strongly the idea of workshops in British regiments, in order to give healthy and profitable employment to the men in their ample leisure time in India, and Lieutenant Crompton had developed this idea very successfully in the battalion of the Rifle Brigade, then stationed at Dinapur. The commanding officer introduced Crompton, who showed the car to Sir William Mansfield in full working order, and informed him that it had been wholly made in the regimental work-

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shops with the exception of the boiler, which was imported from England. The Commander-in-Chief became interested in Crompton, and invited him to Simla as extra aide-de-camp on his personal staff, so as to introduce him to the Viceroy, and to have an opportunity of considering what practical use could be made of his special abilities. He was shortly afterwards appointed to organise a traction engine service in the Punjab, and while so engaged, he and I saw much of one another. Later he developed into a very successful electrical engineer, established the well-known firm of Crompton & Co., raised the London volunteer corps of Electrical Engineers (affiliated to the Royal Engineers), and rendered excellent service with it in the late war in South Africa, whence he returned with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and the C.B.

When serving on the Commander-in-Chief's staff I had to be well mounted, and among the good chargers which my knowledge of the points of a horse helped me to get I had one, whose all-round first-rate qualities deserve special mention. He was a Waler, black-brown in colour, long in body, and low in height (14.3), with legs that looked as if made of steel wire. I would have called him Whalebone, from his tone of colour, but as this name had been appropriated for another horse then on the turf, I called him Charcoal. He was of no pedigree, but had all the points of a thoroughbred. I saw him first in a roughish lot of Walers newly landed at Calcutta, and afterwards came across him at Cook's stables, with a number hung round his neck, awaiting his turn in the course of the morning to be seen by the Army Remount Committee. I had another look at him, and one of the owners of the lot, quick to recognise me, said: "Now's your last chance. He's sure to pass the Committee." I referred to the Government price for remounts being only Rs.400, but he said they had the disposal of the

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whole lot to consider. The horse became mine for Rs.700, and a rattling good purchase he turned out to be. After being trained as a charger in the 9th Lancers riding school, he came to me at Simla, and showed his quality at the Annandale races, where he ran well for the Merchants' Cup—not well enough, however, to win, but he won the Losers' Handicap. That was in September 1868, and in October he walked 270 miles to Sialkot, in the Punjab, and won the Sialkot Derby. From that he went by road about the same distance to Ambala, where he won the Sirhind Derby in November, beating the imported English mare, Governess. He then returned to duty as a charger, when I went on tour with the Commander-in-Chief. In March 1869 he won the Charger Stakes at Ambala; in September, the Merchants' Cup at Simla; and in October, the Give and Take Stakes at Deyrah.

In September 1870 he again won the Merchants' Cup at Simla; in October, the Give and Take Steeplechase at Deyrah; and in December, the Drawing Room Stakes (1 mile) at Peshawar, running the same day in the Great Northern Handicap (2 miles) second to Ranelagh, the thoroughbred of the season, to whom he gave 7 lbs. In 1871 he lost an eye by an unlucky accident. When picketed out in the open, and chucking his head to shake off the flies, thus jerking violently the head-picket ropes, the left peg was plucked out of the ground and swung round, catching him in the left eye, and destroying it. This finished him as a racer, but not as a hunter, for after that he was well known with the Peshawar Vale hounds. But he gave his rider a bad fall there one day, owing to having lost an eye. The rider to whom he was lent was a good man on a horse—none there better—but he did not know Charcoal, and was too impatient to listen when being told what he was to know. Accordingly,

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when they came to the serious water jumps in what was called the "gridiron country," from its many irrigation cuts, and Charcoal turned his head to get his one eye on what was before him, the impetuous rider pulled him round, wouldn't let him look, and both landed in a deep ditch. The horse suffered no harm, the rider did a little, but though he rode him no more that day, he did so on another occasion, and, letting him look when necessary, he found him steady and good at his jumps.

Charcoal remained a fine charger, for having his right eye he could take in the General and the flag at the saluting point to the right on the "passing line." I had him trained for a light dog-cart, to which he took kindly, but he was too touchy to stand even a sight of the whip. Finally I made him a lady's horse—a most successful one—and having sold him to a kind owner on my departure for Central Asia in 1873, I tried in vain to get him back on my return, as his new master said he was too good a lady's horse to be parted with. To sum up his qualities, Charcoal was good as a racer on the flat, good as a chaser, and good as a charger, hunter, hack, and lady's horse.

The winning of the Charger Stakes at Ambala in 1869 was the result of an amusing incident that is worth relating. The race meeting at which it happened was a special one for the occasion of the Durbar held by the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, in honour of His Highness Sher Ali Khan, Amir of Afghanistan. The presence of the great Punjab chiefs and a large military gathering secured a liberal subscription list and a good meeting. All the races filled well with the exception of the Charger Stakes, for which two horses were entered, so well known as racers, and more or less in hard training, that other owners were unwilling to run their chargers against them. These two horses were from rival Horse Artillery and Cavalry stables, and each

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had confident backers who were keen to have the race run. The stewards wanted the show of a race, not a match between two, and the stipulation of no public money being added without at least a third horse running made a difficulty. The race not having filled, there had been no lottery for it at the previous evening's "ordinary," held for these proceedings, but there was much betting, and the desire for the race was as strong as ever the following day. It was on the programme for four in the afternoon, and at eleven in the forenoon, when attending the Viceroy's levee in camp, the Secretary of the Meeting, who was also there, asked me in the name of the stewards to allow my horse, Charcoal, which was then doing regular charger work, to go to the starting-post as a third horse to make up the race. I laughed at the idea, as I said, of adding an entrance payment of "three gold mohrs" (nominal £5) to the gains of one or other of the two favourites. The Secretary told me this had been provided for by the stewards accepting, under the exceptional circumstances of the case, the offer of the two owners to pay the entrance money for a third horse. I would not consent to this, however, but said I would enter my horse to show sport, and, slipping out of the Durbar tent, I sent the syce in charge of the pony on which I had ridden over from the Army Head-quarters' camp to tell Charcoal's groom what was necessary to be done in preparation for the race. Returning to the levee I found a first-class rider for Charcoal in Soames of the 4th Hussars, who did me the favour of wearing my colours (yellow jacket, black cap), and winning the race in splendid style.

The Amir saw the races from his carriage, which was drawn up opposite the Grand Stand, and the Viceroy, with the Commander-in-Chief, rode there and joined him for a short time. I was present on duty with the Commander-in-Chief, and when the Charger

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Stakes came on I told Lord Mayo, who was always interested in sport, of the rival runners from the artillery and cavalry having the race to themselves. The distance was half a mile, and each horse carried 11 st. 4 lbs., a crushing weight. We saw the three horses make a good start and run all the way on even terms until the rails, lined with spectators, were reached, when Charcoal pushed his lean head and long neck forward, and won with the two favourites in close attendance on him. It was an exciting race from start to finish, and on seeing Charcoal pass, Lord Mayo, who had a quick eye for a horse, turned to me and said, "Why! that is your horse"; and I then told him and Sir William Mansfield how Charcoal had, late that forenoon, been requisitioned as a "dummy" animal to make up the race which we had just seen him win. And they were further amused when Soames, after being weighed out, came across to me and said reproachfully: "Why didn't you tell me? I could have had such odds." I explained that I had no idea, untrained as the horse was, he could have done so well. Charcoal was out with me on parade at six o'clock the following morning.

I should mention here that with all my love of horses and a good race, I never indulged in betting or race lotteries. These lotteries were, I think, peculiar to India, being auction sweepstakes worked in this fashion. Say there were a hundred tickets at Rs.5 each, and six horses to run in the race: the lottery was drawn, and the horses' names were put up to auction. Suppose Rs.100 was the highest bid for one, the buyer paid double, half going to the drawer of the horse in the lottery, and half to the fund. The drawer could buy, of course, and if his bid was highest, he paid only the amount bid, and that went to the fund. I could not afford to lose either at this lottery business or in betting, and so I refrained from both, and as a result saw many

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surprises. Men would not believe at first in a good horse, a likely winner, not being "backed" by the owner, and accordingly my horse would often sell in a lottery for a small sum, or start with long odds against him, and win easily. At length they learned by experience, and judged by the honest horse.

I enjoyed good sport occasionally in the autumn, when I was at Simla, with mountain partridge (chikor) and the several kinds of pheasants which were then found within easy reach of the place; and for finding them, dogs were necessary, spaniels being best. I was fortunate enough to get a pair of "Clumbers" which had been bred from imported parents, and from them had a very good litter, one of which, named Dicky, was not only a beauty in looks, but also first-rate in driving out birds, and retrieving them when shot. Simla, in the season, is the summer retreat of many pet and sporting dogs, foreign to India, which accompany their masters and mistresses, or are sent to the hills to escape from the heat of the plains; and at the great dog show there in 1869, my Simla-bred Clumber, Dicky, took first prize over the imported English spaniels. Shortly after this, when with me out shooting, he followed a running pheasant so rashly that he went over a precipice, and broke a foreleg. I set it at once in rough splints, and had him carried into Simla, where he was well attended to. He regained the use of the leg sufficiently to allow of working over easy ground, but I had to deplore his loss when, six months later, he fell, or was taken, from the top of a travelling carriage, and notwithstanding every search and offer of reward, was never recovered. A party of convalescent British soldiers from one of the Himalayan stations was then moving leisurely along the road, and I had no doubt of Dicky being billeted somewhere in their camp, and most kindly treated as a soldier's pet: in India soldiers are so fond of having dogs that

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sometimes stringent rules have to be enforced in a manner that produces ugly ebullitions of temper. During the stay of the 61st at Peshawar, the fashion of keeping dogs was followed so largely that, previous to our departure, it was deemed absolutely necessary to issue an order limiting the number each company might take on the march. Experience had taught that dogs in any number were an intolerable nuisance in camp. The companies were left to carry out the order in their own way. There was a healthy public opinion in the ranks as to which dogs were worth taking, which not, and on that division being made, it was decided to draw lots for the "lucky dogs" which were to accompany the regiment. Some of the companies carried out this arrangement, but others could not get beyond the first question as to the dogs worthy of the ballot, and owners finally found agreement only possible in a general massacre of their pets.

My appointment as Persian Interpreter being a personal one on the staff of Sir William Mansfield, whose tenure of the chief command was to terminate in 1870, I began in 1869 to look around for some other opening in the service.

In the autumn of that year I was promised the first vacancy as Assistant Adjutant-General of Division, and in March 1870 I was posted to the Sirhind Division, with head-quarters at Ambala, to officiate until the vacancy should become permanent. Sir William Mansfield left India in April 1870, and on the eve of his departure wrote to me in the most gratifying manner.

"I have never had an opportunity of marking to you in any form my strong sense of gratitude for all you have done for me, and more especially the noble friendship with which you devoted yourself to me in '66 when I was obliged to face hostility such as falls to the lot of few public men. . . . I am, as the world truly says of me, an undemonstrative man, but believe me, I feel

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very deeply for those who stand by me as you always have done."

Unfortunately for me, owing to the mistaken idea of a probable deficit in the military budget, a Government order was issued in April 1870 (immediately after I had taken up my duties at Ambala) which caused a redistribution of Army Staff appointments, resulting in the reduction of one assistant adjutant-general of Division, and I, as the junior on the list, was that unlucky one. I then became the "odd man" of the establishment, to be sent hither and thither to fill temporary vacancies during the absence of permanent incumbents. In this manner I had three moves in nine months. This source of employment was used up by the end of 1870, when there was no further vacancy to fill, and I was then appointed extra aide-de-camp to the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, for the winter season in Calcutta. My new duties were of a light and pleasant nature, and brought me much into contact with Lord Mayo, perhaps the most personally popular Viceroy India has ever seen.

Calcutta is at its best in every way during the months of December, January, and February; the race meetings then bring people together from all parts of India, and the Government House brilliant gatherings add royally to the festivities of the capital. The Royal Navy is generally well represented by one or two ships from the East India Squadron, and at the time of which I speak, Admiral James Cockburn, then in command, having been lately appointed, came round from Bombay in his flagship, *Forte*, which lay in the Hugli, and was an object of much interest to sight-seers. Torpedoes and sub-marine mines were then in their infancy, and the Admiral arranged an exhibition of the latter, which attracted a great crowd of spectators. The arrival of a lively school of por-

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poises near the scene of operations added immensely to the success of the show, but fortunately for them they were not in the mine area when the sunken mine was exploded. They were evidently exploring the neighbouring depths of the Hugli when this took place, and being of an inquisitive nature, as all who have seen them approach and swim round a ship at sea must have observed, they plunged forward in greedy curiosity to the outer eddies of the violently disturbed waters, and found an easy catch of startled fish. And as their glistening black forms were seen to roll over and over in the subsiding upheaval, the native spectators shouted with delight, and we were told that many of them believed the object of the mine explosion was to throw the porpoises up from the muddy bed of the Hugli. So they were well pleased with what they saw.

The mass of the natives of India have a great dread of the ocean, known to them as the "Black Water," and they admire much those who not only like to live on it, but also to fight on it. It was not, therefore, so very surprising that a Bengali Babu clerk at Government House made a ludicrous mistake in a desire to show his admiration of the Admiral in high command on the Indian Ocean. The Babu, like many of his class who have been partly educated, was original, and amazingly amusing in some of his expressions, but quite unconsciously so, as he was entirely without any sense of humour. He was a voracious reader of books, and happened at that particular time to be feasting on Harrison Ainsworth's "Crichton" (James), surnamed "The Admirable." Among other duties he had to prepare the daily list of Government House dinner guests for one of the aides-de-camp to examine and sign, previous to it being laid before the Viceroy in the evening. Admiral Cockburn was one of the dinner guests, and the Babu being

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unaware that as Naval Commander-in-Chief he was an "Excellency," was puzzled how to distinguish him in the list. He hovered between "Excellency" and the Lieutenant-Governor's title, "His Honour." He hesitated to put the Admiral as high as the Viceroy, and yet he did not like to rate him simply on an equality with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, even though that dignitary ruled over seventy-five millions of his countrymen. The similarity in a way of name and title seemed to have suggested to his pedantic mind the solution of the titular problem which was puzzling it, by a mixed inspiration from "Crichton," and he wrote in the list of guests, "His Honour, The Admirable Cockburn." The aide-de-camp returned late from his pre-occupying social duties outside Government House, and after a hasty glance at the list, signed it without particularly noticing the Admiral's name, and sent it to the Viceroy's room. But Lord Mayo at once noticed the curiosity, and writing over it with emphasisive blue pencil, "*What is this?*" sent the paper to the secretary who is charged with the control of the military household. That officer came to the aide-de-camps' room in a very noisy hurry, with the paper in his hand, saying: "You fellows lead me a ragged life. This absurdity is beyond a joke." The Babu's blunder was explained; it was clear that he had acted with the very best intentions; the aide-de-camp apologised for his unfortunate omission to scrutinise the list; and Lord Mayo laughed heartily.

The local press did not hear of this incident, otherwise it would doubtless have found a place in a series of letters purporting to be written from "Paugulpore, Calcutta," which appeared in one of the principal "dailies" of India about that time. ("Paugulpore" is Hindustani for "Foolsplace.") These letters were a mixture of sense and silliness, but the allusions and

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parodies were sometimes too personal. The newspaper which published them was always eager to be regarded as a favoured "Press" authority and general supporter of the Government. On the occasion of the investiture of the Maharajah of Patiala as Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India, by the Viceroy in Calcutta at that time, the managing partner of the paper in question, being anxious to occupy as prominent a place as possible at the ceremony which was to take place in Government House, came to the aide-de-camps' room to await an interview with one of the secretaries, regarding his request for that favour. In conversation with me, he spoke of the Paugulpore news letters, and on learning that I had read them, said they had been published during his absence, otherwise they would have been considerably toned down. On his asking if they had been noticed in Government House, I said I thought not; but this did not satisfy his anxiety, as he continued to speak of his regret concerning them, adding that he would explain to the secretary whom he had come to see. I strongly advised him not to introduce the subject. I again told him that the letters most probably had not been seen, and even if they had been read, no harm could result, as while they might have amused some, they certainly could have hurt none. But he evidently did not agree with me in regarding anything in his paper as so unimportant, and on being well received by the secretary, and obtaining what he wanted, he became effusive in thanks and talk, and went on to explain how unfortunate his absence was when the Paugulpore letters appeared in his paper. The result was that immediately after his departure, the secretary, who had not read the letters, asked for the back numbers of the paper which contained them, and found some harmless heavy jokes aimed at himself.

The Maharajah of Patiala took with him to Calcutta

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his excellent bagpipe band, composed of Sikhs and other natives of the Punjab, who had been well trained by a piper from the 92nd Highlanders. It is now well known how extremely popular the Highland bagpipe music is in many of the Indian regiments, Gurkha and frontier, some of them having good bagpipe bands of their own. The Raja of Jheend, a famous Sikh chief and a kinsman of Patiala, also had at that time a first-rate bagpipe band, trained and led by a fine-looking piper from the 79th Highlanders who took his discharge in order to enter the Raja's service. When Sir William Mansfield visited the Raja, Colonel Reynell Taylor, Commissioner of Sirhind and Political Officer for the Cis-Sutlej States, pointed out the piper to us among the ministers and attendant squires as the only one wearing shoes. He explained that in the contract of service which fully secured liberal pay and good treatment, it was stipulated that shoes were not to be worn within doors in the presence of the Raja or his Ministers, but the sturdy Scot stipulated on his part, that he was not to observe this native custom, which is regarded as a sign of humility, when any other European not doing the same was present. Colonel Taylor said that the contract was well and honestly kept.

In March 1871 I decided to take a year's leave of absence to England, as I had then served ten years continuously in India without change to Europe. I had had a very enjoyable time in Calcutta on the staff of Lord Mayo, who most kindly said on my leaving that he would look after my interests on my return to India. I took advantage of the opportunity when in England on this occasion to go through a course of instruction at the Hythe School of Musketry, and obtained a First Class Extra Certificate.

When on my way back to India early in 1872, I heard of the lamentable and tragic death of Lord

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Mayo, at Port Blair, in the Andamans, by the hand of an assassin, so that, on arrival in March, I found myself on the Unemployed List. Indeed, I had been graded for reduced pay on that list since the end of 1870, for my temporary duty as extra aide-de-camp to the Viceroy carried no staff pay, and I had been at this pecuniary disadvantage during my year's leave of absence to England.

At that time there were many field officers of the old Indian army for whom there were no openings in regiments or on the staff, and they were posted to the various stations, generally as selected by themselves, for what was called "general duty," which meant, in most cases, the performance of duties of a perfunctory and often apparently trivial nature. No doubt, many of those thus posted were hardly qualified for any sort of command, and I think it was from a fair feeling of generosity that those who suffered from the collapse of the old native army, and were perhaps unfitted for the new order of things, were permitted to do nominal duty, until they could qualify for a pension on which they might live decently in England. The idea in the military mind was that in most cases general duty at a garrison station implied inferiority in some way or other, so I was determined to avoid this suspicion, and not to row in that galley.

I went to Calcutta in March 1872, where the Commander-in-Chief then was, and applied for any post, staff or regimental, suitable to my rank. I was told that there was little hope of any early appointment, as the candidates' lists were full. Considering my field service with the newly raised 7th Punjab Infantry fourteen years previously, I was greatly depressed by being told that my chances were just as good as my neighbours' on the crowded lists. I then applied to Lord Napier of Merchiston, who being the senior of the two Presidency Governors had

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temporarily succeeded as Governor-General on the death of Lord Mayo, and he offered me the only military post then vacant, and in his gift. This was Second-in-Command of the Malwa Bhil regiment, a local corps in Central India, raised from the predatory aboriginal tribes to keep order among them, and to become a civilising agent through example. With the appointment are associated the position and duties of Political Assistant to the Resident in Central India, also known as Agent to the Governor-General. For a captain the post is a good one in point of emolument, but for a major, (I was then Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel) quite the reverse, the pay being consolidated, and less than a major's unemployed pay. There was a loss of about £50 a year to me by accepting the post, but I preferred this loss to general duty, which I considered detrimental to my future prospects.

My good friend, General the Hon. Frederick Thesiger of the 95th, had now become Adjutant-General in India, and helped me in every way that he could. When I went to Calcutta to see the Commander-in-Chief, he said that he would keep me in view, and this comforted me much on going away to my remote new post. He moreover told me that the Commander-in-Chief, on hearing that the Government had asked for my services as Second-in-Command of the Malwa Bhil corps, had said he supposed I would return if opportunity offered; and this gave me further hope.

The Resident and Governor-General's agent in Central India at that time was Colonel Sir Henry Daly, the well-known irregular cavalry leader, who rose to fame in the Mutiny campaign. As he desired to see me before I joined my post, he arranged that I should visit him in his camp near Jabalpur. I was previously well acquainted with him, and he received me most kindly, expressing surprise that I

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had accepted the appointment, and sympathising with me when he heard of the failure of my pilgrimage to Army Head-quarters at Calcutta. He urged me to reconsider my acceptance of the post, and offered to assist in explaining the reason to Government. He was very earnest in his advice, but I adhered to my engagement to go to the lonely station of Maunpur in Central India, to "bury" myself, as Daly put it. I found Maunpur the very loneliest place I had ever been in; I was the only European there, the doctor and the police officer being both natives. I was then down in real bad luck, but made the best of it, hoping and hoping for a favourable turn of the wheel of fortune to give me a lift up. And I had not long to wait, as I shall shortly show.

Sir Henry Daly knew Lord Sandhurst well, and had written to him about me. He had a letter in reply :—

"Your letter in favour of Gordon. As you know, I am extremely interested in him. Having him on my personal staff for five years, he distinguished himself by a friendly loyalty of a kind that I may characterise as a very rare quality indeed. His powers of labour are great, and are seen alike in his addiction to study, and his habits of business, and finally, he is blessed with an amount of discretion, and if need be, secrecy, which I have never seen exceeded."

In this letter Lord Sandhurst referred to Lord Mayo's death, and said :—

"The last letter I had from Mayo was about Gordon, in which he told me that he should certainly not forget his interests."

I soon found that my new post had its compensations in the excellent shooting which the neighbouring jungles afforded, and a party, which I made up at the instance of Sir Henry Daly, was the means of my forming an acquaintance with a keen sportsman, Tom Davison,

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of the 15th (King's) Hussars, then stationed at Mhow, that ripened into the closest and happiest lasting friendship. We had good sport in the Narbada jungles after tigers, killing, with others, too well-known and much feared "man-eaters." The first of these lay low in the long grass and feathery bush cover until we were close upon him, and then, having laid aside the fear of man —for he had killed and eaten a herdsman twelve days before, and another but a short time previously—he rose straight at us before he was attacked, but fell dead with a bullet raking his spine and another behind the left shoulder, both fatal shots. The second man-eater tried to steal away, but was met by a blank cartridge fire from the "stops" and then came back in a howling fury, and looked for a victim. He first made for Davison, but catching sight of my head as my elephant steed descended into a dry water-course, he dropped and crawled in the grass, without giving Davison a chance, and tried to spring on me in the howdah. I met him just in time with a bullet in the breast, which dropped him at the elephant's feet, but he was up and on the right side of the elephant's head in a moment, and in trying to reach me, broke the front part of the howdah with a blow of his powerful forepaw. The driver slipped his right leg, which had been protected by the elephant's apron-like ear, over to the left, receiving a scratch from the tiger, and held on, urging the animal, in the language known to mahout and elephant, to beat, kick, and crush the yellow monster. The elephant was badly bitten and clawed on the trunk and head, and her right eye was blinded by the eyebrow being torn down over it. She gave voice to suppressed screams of fear, pain, and rage, and made the most violent efforts to shake the tiger off. My Bhil gun-bearer behind me in the howdah, regarding the situation as desperate, after handing me my rifle, slid down the elephant's hind-quarters, and took refuge in a tree. All I could

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do was to hold on to the back of the howdah, the front being broken, and watch an opportunity to fire safely, for the tiger was in such a position that it was impossible at first for me to attempt to use my rifle without seriously injuring the elephant—I had no thought of myself, but only of the Rs.1,500 (the value of the elephant) that shot might cost me. At last I had a safe chance to put the muzzle against the tiger's side behind the shoulder, having to grasp and use the rifle with one hand like a pistol, while I held on to the back part of the swaying howdah with the other. One shot (it was an expanding bullet), and with a great growl of agony from the tiger, and a trumpet yell of rage from the elephant, the whole of us were struggling loose in the high bushes.

Davison had hurried to the scene, and I saw him standing up in his elephant howdah on the bank of the dry water-course above me, rifle in hand, looking for the tiger. His eye lighted on me, and I silently pointed to the dying tiger, which, however, had life enough left to make an end of me if he could have seen me, and he promptly put two bullets from his ten-bore "Dougal" rifle into him. The elephant, which had run away but a short distance, was brought back by the mahout, and my gun-bearer was recovered from his tree perch. My rifle was found with the stock broken in two, and my ball-gun was picked up with the barrels so badly dented as to be useless. The elephant was coaxed and encouraged to come forward to the dead tiger, and after reconnoitring and feeling cautiously with her outstretched trunk, she gave the body a kick of contempt, and allowed it to be tied on her back, to be carried to our camp in triumph. This elephant was a female of well-known staunch courage in tiger-hunting; the females are often found to face great danger better than the males.

No time was lost in attending to the elephant's hurts, but preparatory to handling them, she was fed

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with a stiff mixture of coarse molasses (the "goor" to be got in every village bazaar) and flour, with opium and brandy thrown in liberally, after which she took an intelligent and good-tempered interest in the proceedings. With the tent-pitchers' repairing needles and stout thread, and the help of the mahouts and their assistants, her cuts and wounds were stitched and salved, and many yards of narrow native cotton cloth were used in swathing her torn trunk. She was fed by hand for several days, and seemed quite to understand that this was done to keep the bandages on the damaged trunk from being displaced by her use of it in feeding herself. She was left at the camping-place under good care, and in less than a fortnight walked back to Indore, and rejoined the elephant stud of the Maharajah Holkar, who had kindly lent her. I wrote a short account of what had happened to His Highness, and the Indore agent, who was in my camp, sent a fuller account. I afterwards learnt from the Maharajah, when I called upon him at Indore, that he had rewarded the mahout both for his courage in holding on to the elephant, and his skill and care in securing its recovery from the wounds. The tiger was fully recognised as the well-known man-eater of Julwania, the village where we were encamped, and he had been hunted for by more than one party of European sportsmen. He was a very old animal, with one big front tooth gone, and had a remarkably short tail, which made its measured length (always from tip of nose to tip of tail) only 8 feet 7 inches; but he was of very great girth, with the biggest forearm I have ever seen.

The Julwania villagers were delighted to be freed from the terror of this tiger; and yet this terror had been as naught to one of them ten days previously, when the sight of one of his plough oxen in the grip of the hungry beast drove him, in desperation, to attempt its rescue, armed only with a small axe. The

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tiger struck him down furiously and dragged the bullock away; and the villager was afterwards found in a dying state. Familiarity with the sight of the tiger sometimes makes the poor, unarmed native fearless, when in the agony of witnessing the loss of his most valued property, as in this instance. The herdsmen in the tiger tracts are always keen to welcome the advent of the Sahibs who come to find and fight the Jungle King, as they style the tiger. There is a story of a herdsman in the Rohilkand district who tracked a tiger, gorged on one of his own cattle, to its sleeping-place, and then went to the camp of the District Magistrate, a well-known sportsman, which happened to be near, and informed on the murdering robber. The hunting elephants were promptly made ready, and the magistrate's party soon arrived on the scene; but the tiger lay close and could not be found. The herdsman was on an elephant with the native attendants and failed to get them up to the exact spot he pointed out. There was then a taunting suggestion that he had brought them all out in the burning May sun for nothing, on hearing which he slid off the elephant, girded up his loins, and made a sign that he would beat out the tiger. He found the gorged beast in deep sleep in the long grass, and striking him a blow with his iron-bound bamboo staff, shouted, as he turned and fled, "Come out, Sir Tiger! the Burra (great) Sahib is here." As far as I can remember, the man escaped to enjoy his reward. Once in a tiger hunt, which I "captained," being anxious to show a friend some good sport, I went on an elephant to direct the "beat." Some herdsmen had tracked three tigers to a small clump of bushes on the bank of a stream, and one of them accompanied me to show exactly where they were; he led right up to the spot on foot, declining to get on an elephant, saying when pressed at starting: "I am acquainted with tigers and

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their ways, but not with elephants, and would rather lead you up to the spot on foot: the tigers will lie close on a hot day like this, and if they come out, and I am in danger, I know the Sahib will shoot straight." The three tigers were driven out and killed.

Our pleasant shooting party broke up on the 11th June, and I went off by myself down the Narbada, by unfrequented paths, to negotiate the surrender of an enterprising and cunning Bhil leader, Jugtia by name, who was "out" with a considerable following, and keeping the country near his forest haunts in a continual state of alarm. I had been previously invited by Sir Henry Daly to Indore, to be instructed regarding the recent history of this Bhil chief, and the necessity of securing his submission. It appeared that he had come forward some time before as a claimant for the revival of certain traditional rights and privileges asserted to belong to the aboriginal Bhil inhabitants of the district of Chiculda, in the territory of the Maharajah Holkar of Indore. These rights had been gradually restricted and reduced, until they had almost disappeared, and with dispossession had come the harsh treatment meted out by the superior caste to the inferior. Jugtia had all the qualities of a leader, and boldly declaring himself the champion of the Bhil cause, he inspired his followers to insist upon the restitution of their rights. The movement spread, and Holkar's officials, finding themselves unable to stem it by other means, determined to do so by the capture of the leader Jugtia by treachery. He was invited to visit the Governor of the district, under a solemn promise of safe-conduct, in order to discuss the matters in dispute, and after a talk, he and those who accompanied him were regaled at a feast, and treated to a very liberal allowance of their favourite strong drink, "mahua," after which they went on their way home. But they had drunk too heavily to allow of a continuous journey,

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and fell asleep within the jurisdiction of another of Holkar's local governors, who, finding them there the next day, made Jugtia a prisoner (dismissing his few followers) on the ground that the time of his safe-conduct had expired, and therefore his arrest was perfectly lawful.

The report of this capture was too welcome at Indore to allow of any hearing of the complaint of broken faith: it was enough for Holkar's Government that they had in close custody Jugtia, the firebrand, the outcast Bhil, who claimed equal rights with the ruling race; and they recommended that he should be locked up for a long time. He was therefore sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment in the Indore jail. After a few months there he became well acquainted with his cage, and his quick eye saw the means of escape in a drain, supposed to be securely blocked by a grating, and thought impossible of passage by a man; but the lean, lithe Bhil managed to work and worm his way through it, and forcing the outer grating, he regained his liberty. His wild-life craft and cunning enabled him to elude the hot hue-and-cry which followed, and with cat-like instinct he quickly found his way back to his jungle home, where he was received as one returned from the dead. His influence became greater than ever, and, knowing what recapture had in store for him, he went about his bandit business in a methodical manner, with the full determination of doing as much injury as possible to Holkar's Government and people. All the Bhils in the wild tracts were for him, as with them the breaking of the "bachan," the promise of safe-conduct, is the worst crime they know of—far worse, in their estimation, than murder. The adjoining British protected state of Burwani, with a considerable Bhil population, was in some danger from the excitement spreading there, and then it was

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that Sir Henry Daly intervened, and recommended that as faith had undoubtedly been broken with Jugtia when on his way back from Chiculda under promise of safe-conduct, he should be offered a free pardon for himself and his followers, on condition of due submission to the Maharajah's officials, and future good behaviour; all their misdeeds to be condoned, their proved rights restored, and facilities given for settlements on cultivable lands, under the supervision of a British political officer. Holkar at first felt his dignity unequal to sanctioning this proposal, but Sir Henry adhered to his opinion, and soon gained his point. He carried the matter to a speedy conclusion by inducing the Maharajah to sign the pardon, which he undertook to have delivered to Jugtia, on his acceptance of the conditions being completed.

Sir Henry told me that after his capture and escape Jugtia was naturally suspicious to a degree, and that it would be necessary to approach him without the slightest appearance of force. His jungle haunt was beyond my field of political supervision, but as I was known to the Bhils as a sportsman, and could go as such in that direction, it was considered that I had the best chance of managing a meeting with Jugtia. I employed a Brahman priest of Burwani as my intermediary, and he succeeded in arranging a meeting, which took place with great precautions on Jugtia's part. The appointed place was a cattle shed in a wilderness of jungle, to reach which I had to cross the Narbada in flood, and walk 3 miles. The time fixed was sunset. I was punctual, but not so Jugtia; his Bhils with their bows strung and arrows handy were posted all about on the watch, and there was much rapid movement among them to and fro. They had all the appearance in the twilight and tree shadows of great bats flitting in and out round us, bent on close search. The Brahman had

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warned me of possible delay owing to Jugtia's suspicions, and I went provided with the needs of a light meal and sleep. A native string bedstead was provided, and I was in a light sleep, when I was awaked at midnight by one of my men (I had only a servant and three unarmed Bhils of the Malwa regiment with me), who said that Jugtia was approaching. He came forward quickly, evidently labouring under great nervous pressure, looked me steadily in the face (there was plenty of firelight), laid his sword and bow at my feet, and made a sign of submission. I told him to be under no apprehension, as we never broke the "bachan," and then proceeded to speak of the pardon and its conditions. He accepted all, and on his solemn promise being formally given through the Brahman priest to keep the agreement faithfully, and present himself at Maunpur or any other place as directed, I handed him the Maharajah's document of pardon and conditions. Jugtia said that he had never met a British officer face to face before, and that this meeting had taught him what others had spoken of, viz., the difference between the Sahibs and the native officials of whom he had knowledge.

These negotiations being completed, I was on my way back to my lonely station at Maunpur, when a mounted messenger reached me with a letter from Sir Henry Daly, enclosing a telegram from the Foreign Secretary to him, saying that my services had been asked for by the Commander-in-Chief to be Assistant Adjutant-General at Army Head-quarters, and informing me that he had answered, "Yes." Here was the change of luck I had been looking for, and I saw at once that it was my good friend, General Thesiger, who had been instrumental in turning the wheel of fortune in my favour, and giving me a lift out of the solitudes of

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Maunpur. Five days later I received a letter from the Adjutant-General, informing me of my appointment, and stating that I was to be made First Assistant in October.

I entered upon my new duties at Simla on 22nd July 1872, and had an interview with the Commander-in-Chief on the 25th, when I thanked him for my appointment. I was formally gazetted First Assistant Adjutant-General on 28th September, and three days later I was for the moment struck dumb with astonishment, on being told that His Excellency had declared this further appointment to have been unauthorised by him. The Adjutant-General stated the contrary, and produced the proof. The Commander-in-Chief, however, was obstinate, and insisted on a letter being addressed to the Military Secretary to the Government of India, stating that there had been a mistake in the matter, and desiring the Gazette notification to be cancelled. Of course it was necessary for me, in self-defence, to take steps to protect myself against a misconception of the facts of the case, for cancelment of a gazetted appointment generally implied something unfavourable to the individual named unless otherwise notified.

This difference between the Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant-General was the subject of considerable comment, and of sympathy for me, the unfortunate sufferer. But it was found impossible to discuss the matter with His Excellency, and there was nothing for me but submission to unavoidable ill luck. It was bad enough to have to accept this, but I afterwards learnt that I had cause for thankfulness in escaping worse luck, which would certainly have befallen me had it not been for the firmness of my friends, the Adjutant-General and Sir Henry Daly. An attempt was made to send me back to the jungles of Central India by an unofficial letter being addressed to Sir

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Henry, in which he was asked if I could be reappointed Second-in-Command of the Malwa Bhil corps, for though the regiment is under the Foreign Department, yet the Resident has a voice in nomination and promotion. He at once judged from the tenor of the letter that caprice had more to do with the change of views than anything else, and promptly replied that it would be inconvenient, if not impossible, to disturb the arrangements which had been made on my departure. After some delay I was appointed Assistant Adjutant-General of the Lahore division of the Army, and I entered upon the duties of the post in the end of October (1872).

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CHAPTER IV

(1873-1874)

In February 1873 I was appointed Second-in-Command of the Diplomatic Mission[1] to Kashgar, Central Asia, under Mr Douglas Forsyth, C.B., of the Bengal Civil Service, which General Sir Henry Rawlinson, in his remarks before the Royal Geographical Society in June 1874, described as "one of the best appointed Missions that has left India since the days of Malcolm and Mountstuart Elphinstone." The dormant commission of envoy was vested in me, to take effect in event of Mr Forsyth ceasing, from any cause, to exercise his functions, and then I had the power to nominate a second-in-command to myself, without reference to seniority or official standing. I was immensely delighted with this gift of good fortune so soon after my deep disappointment at Army Head-quarters, and I set my face towards Central Asia with a happy heart, and in high hope of helping to solve the geographical problem of the "Roof of the World." I was eager in looking forward to opportunities of increasing our slender knowledge of those interesting, and then almost unknown countries

[1] The late Sir T. Douglas Forsyth, K.C.S.I., C.B.; General Sir T. E. Gordon, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.; the late Surgeon-General W. H. Bellew, C.S.I., Sanitary Commissioner, Punjab; Colonel John Biddulph, late Political Agent in Beluchistan; General E. F. Chapman, C.B., late commanding the troops in Scotland; Colonel H. Trotter, C.B., R.E., H.M.'s Consul-General for Rumania, and late Military Attaché, Constantinople; the late Dr F. Stoliczka, Ph.D. of the Geological Survey of India.

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which lie immediately north of the Himalayas, and of assisting to unfold to the world the mysteries of the Pamir.

It was tolerably well known that the wide extent of lofty mountains between Eastern (or Chinese) Turkistan and Ladakh barred the passage of a modern army in that direction, but it was an open question regarding the Pamirs, and the passes leading to India through Gilgit and Chitral. The Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, spoke to me about this important point of exploration at my final interview with him in Simla, and asked my opinion concerning the work being done without a strong escort. The question evidently had reference to the fate of Mr Hayward, the traveller who was murdered on the threshold of the Pamirs three years previously. I said that if the ruler of Kashgar befriended us, and we passed from place to place with the goodwill of the chiefs, there need be no danger; and this belief and confidence eventually proved to be well-founded. It was then understood that I would conduct the chief reconnaissance parties, and it was strongly impressed upon me to keep clear of complications, which meant that massacre was to be avoided. Thus I had the good fortune to lead the exploring party, in January 1874, from Kashgar to the Russian frontier, north towards Almati, and afterwards that which crossed and recrossed the Pamirs to and from Wakhan and the Oxus, in March, April, and May of the same year.

The Kashgar Envoy, Yakub Khan, Tora (Prince), had come to India with instructions from his sovereign, the Atalik Ghazi, to ask that a return British Mission should accompany him back. After this was arranged with the Government, the envoy proceeded to Constantinople on a special mission to the Sultan. While there, great efforts were made by the Russian Ambassador (who, I think, at that time was Ignatieff,

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a very clever Oriental diplomatist) to induce him to alter the route of his return journey, and to go *viâ* St Petersburg, Tashkend, and Almati, which would save him from the danger of the intense heat of India, to be followed by the great cold and discomfort of the high Karakoram passes. The advantages in other ways were also set forth. It was fortunate for us that the Atalik Ghazi's stern discipline kept the envoy straight on his ordered course, but until we had trustworthy news of his departure for India, we were in an agony of suspense lest our keen hopes of enterprise and exploration in the almost *terra incognita*, whither we were bound, should be disappointed. For had the envoy been won over by Russia, our Mission would not have proceeded. But all went well, and the objects of the Mission were fully accomplished.

At the last moment it was remembered that some of the trouble which preceded the Abyssinian war of 1868 was caused by King Theodore's personal feeling in connection with an expectation on his part of a letter from the Queen of England, and accordingly the risk of anything similarly disagreeable happening in the present case was provided against by an autograph letter from Her Majesty being obtained in time to reach us before crossing the Karakoram. Yakub Khan, the Kashgar Envoy (also known as Haji Tora, the Pilgrim Prince), hurrying back from his successful mission to the Sultan, overtook us on the frontier near the Karakoram, and accompanied us to Yarkand, where we were well received by the Governor, Mahomed Yunis, the second dignitary in the kingdom.

Yakub Khan brought in his train from Constantinople four Turkish military officers to assist in organising the Kashgar troops, and two superior artisans to superintend arsenal works. There also came with him a private gentleman, styled the Effendi Zaman Beg, who described himself as a Russian

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refugee from the Daghestan province of the Caucasus, travelling in search of a long-lost relative, a Daghestani like himself, who was said to have wandered to Kashgar in search of adventure and employment. He eventually found this relative at the capital, in command of a corps of infantry, with artillery attached to it, which he drilled in what was called the Turkish fashion. He kept his men in barracks, and maintained an appearance of discipline among them, which evidently made his corps more serviceable than the others in the Kashgar army.

Before Yakub Khan overtook our Mission a communication was received from the Foreign Office putting us on our guard against the Effendi, owing to certain suspicions entertained by the British Ambassador at Constantinople. Zaman Beg took an early opportunity of making our acquaintance and seeking our sympathy. He was a man of some education, well informed, and of good address, and said that he had been exiled by the Russian Government on account of his political opinions. During our winter residence at the capital he affected our society much, and used to speak in the strongest terms of disgust and contempt of the Atalik's Court and government, saying that it was a great relief to him to be able to unburthen himself to us in confidence; but we knew his character, and were careful in our remarks. We had eventually to appear less hospitable than he wished us to be, as we found his love of our Mess liquors and cigars too much for our small store to bear. I shall have occasion again to refer to this Effendi.

The preliminary work of preparing the camp, buying and equipping the transport mules, organising the camp followers, and arranging for supplies during the journey, was a pleasant duty to all of us, and everything was done in a very complete manner. The money for use

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beyond Kashmir territory (where the rupee is current) was required to be in the form of the gold "tillas" of Bokhara and Kokand (value about ten shillings each), which are brought to India by merchants, and the pilgrims who journey to Mecca *viâ* Bombay; these we bought from the native bankers in the Punjab, and packed in strong cases, which were stowed with our ammunition boxes under a military guard. At the same time the Mission Treasurer, a well-to-do Sikh trader who had visited Yarkand several times, kept a sharp eye on the gold tillas, and throughout our journeys and wanderings there never was any loss. The military escort for the Mission consisted of twenty picked men of the Guide Corps, cavalry and infantry, armed with short Snider rifles, and were the first of the Indian native army to receive breech-loaders. I was able to have them put through a short course of instruction in the use of their new arms at Rawal Pindi, where the Mission camp was formed, previous to departure.

The heat in camp at Rawal Pindi in July was very great, rising above 100° Fahr. in the tents, and in less than two months afterwards we were at Aktagh, on the Yarkand frontier, where a minimum thermometer, placed in the open air, registered a temperature of 24° Fahr. below zero (56° of frost), while another, set under the shelter of the verandah of a tent, registered 15° Fahr. below zero. This difference of 124° in less than two months, with such intense cold, was trying to us all, but especially to the natives of India who accompanied the Mission. These, however, were so well cared for and protected against cold and ills, that there was not a single casualty among them from first to last, though a few suffered from frost bite. We had been extremely careful in selecting only the fittest for the expedition from the many candidates who offered and volunteered (the Mission service was

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very popular), and the further strict medical examinations at Srinagar in Kashmir, and again at Leh in Ladakh, before launching forth into the icy wilderness beyond, secured only the very fittest being taken.

I accompanied Mr Forsyth to Jamu, the winter capital of the Maharajah of Kashmir[1] (His Highness Runbhir Singh), to make arrangements for the laying out of provisions and stores at the several stages across the uninhabited highlands of Tibet, by both the Karakoram and Chang-Chanmo routes, as well as for transport and supplies on the way through Kashmir. The Maharajah displayed an earnest desire to meet all our wishes, and to do all in his power to make smooth the difficulties of our journey; and assured us that he had issued minute instructions to all his frontier officials to assist us in every way. I may here say that our experiences both on the way over to Eastern Turkistan and back to India proved the thorough goodwill of the Maharajah and his officials, to the British Government.

It was intended, in arrangement with Sher Ali, the ruler of Kabul, that we should return to India through Afghanistan, as the existing friendly relations between India, Kabul, and Kashgar rendered it perfectly easy for that journey to be made. The Amir's special envoy, Nur Mahomed Shah, whom we met at Simla in June, previous to our departure, seemed to think that there could be no difficulty or objection, and we left in the full hope of the project being carried out. But when the Afghan Envoy returned to Kabul a great change came over the Amir, and he began to show signs of hostility to India and the British Government in words and acts. He stated publicly, in open Durbar, that it was impossible for him to guarantee the safety of Europeans in his country, and he made this the pretext

[1] The late General H.H. Runbhir Singh, G.C.S.I., C.I.E., father of the present Maharajah, H.H. Pertab Singh, G.C.I.E., who succeeded in 1885.

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for declining to permit the passage of the Kashgar Mission through his territories on its way back to India. It was hoped that this objection might be overcome, and efforts were made to induce a reconsideration of the unfavourable reply, but the further information received by the Government of India pointed to a risk which it was dangerous to run, and orders were sent to us at Kàshgar, to the effect that the return journey through Afghanistan was on no account to be attempted without special sanction from India.

Attached to the Mission were two Mahomedan officers, specially well fitted to assist us: Resaldar Mahomed Afzul Khan, native adjutant of the 11th Bengal Lancers (Prince of Wales'), and Sirdar Ibrahim Khan of the Punjab Police. I had many opportunities of observing the former with his regiment at the head-quarters of the Lahore division, and when I was instructed to select a native officer to accompany the Mission, I had no hesitation in recommending him as well qualified in every way to render excellent service. He was a son of the hereditary Vazir of the Amir of Kabul, in the Sadozai dynasty, and thus also had the advantage of popular belief in traditional wisdom. He afterwards was made Orderly Officer to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and in 1880 became the British representative at the Court of Kabul, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and finally, on retirement in 1885, received the rank and title of Nawab, and a special pension. He proved himself a most valuable officer in the negotiations with the late Amir Abdul Rahman, previous to his accession to the throne. In this duty he was associated with his colleague in the Kashgar Mission, Sirdar Ibrahim Khan, who also was a most successful political agent.

In the end of December, when we were in Kashgar, the British Envoy, Mr. Forsyth, sent Ibrahim Khan, who had previously been employed on special service

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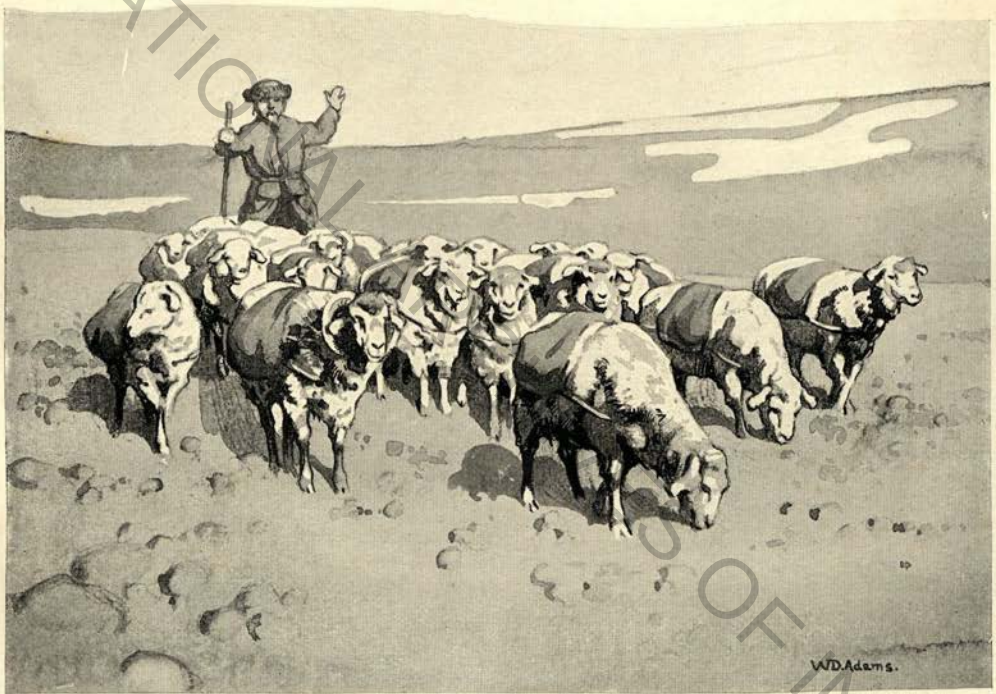

LOAD-CARRYING SHEEP, W. TIBET.

Capt. J. Biddulph, who conducted the advance party of the Mission by the Chang Chanmo route, took a flock of these with him.

T. E. G.] [*To face page* 102.

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in Turkistan, Badakhshan, and Kabul, with a letter to the Amir Sher Ali, asking permission for the Mission to travel back to India through his dominions, so as to spare us the hardship of another journey over the high passes of Tibet. Ibrahim Khan had a severe journey over the mountains to Badakhshan and Kabul, and carried out his instructions well; but he was purposely kept waiting long at the capital for an answer, and as we were cut off from communication with India for some time in winter, our envoy had to act on his own initiative. It was decided to seize the opportunity to gain accurate knowledge of the geographical position of Wakhan, and its political relations with the adjoining states, and thus to set at rest those doubts which could not be satisfactorily solved at the time of the negotiations with Russia regarding the Afghan frontier in that direction, in 1872-73. Advantage was also to be taken to gain information regarding the Gilgit frontier of India's vassal state, Kashmir, and the facts connected with the murder of Mr Hayward, which took place between Yassin and Wakhan in 1870.

But there was always a difficulty in meeting the suspicions of the Atalik Ghazi, who did not understand our desire for geographical knowledge, and expressed surprise that we should leave comfortable house-quarters, in the depth of winter, for the cold and hardship of tent life. Thus on our request to visit the Chadir Kul lake, on his northern frontier towards Russian territory, he demurred to our journey there, but afterwards gave his consent on the condition that we would not communicate with the Russians at Naryn. We were asked by the authorities to go as unlike Europeans as possible, and to trust entirely to them for camp accommodation, food, and baggage animals. We were too anxious to make the journey not to submit to any discomfort in the arrangements, and accordingly we found it necessary to adapt ourselves in a manner to their rough habits and primitive

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ways of taking food. We made the happy discovery, however, when following their example in a refreshing and warming drink, that green tea is a capital stimulant in high altitudes at zero temperature. That which would excite and shake the nerves to aching restlessness in a temperate climate was a solace and a sedative there. We had formed plans for a more extended journey than we were allowed to make, and were much disappointed; still, we contrived to see a great deal of most interesting country during the eleven days we were travelling.

We were aware at the outset that our accompanying official host regarded us as too eccentric in desiring to visit the Tian Shan highlands in the Arctic cold then prevailing. He exaggerated the difficulties and discomforts of the journey, and produced a short supply of food the first night, hoping thus to induce compliance with his wish for an early return; but we held on to our course, and reached the Chadir Kul lake on the Russian frontier, which was the main object of the journey. We were then about 30 miles from the Russian fort of Naryn. The principal Kashgar official with our personally conducted party was most anxious to dissuade us from visiting the lake. The last camp was 16 miles from it, and he said it would be necessary to go there and return the same day, making a long day's travelling, and on my acceptance of the conditions, he began to raise further objections concerning Kazaks (Cossacks) and Kara Kirghiz from the Russian side of the frontier, who might give trouble; but a direct reference to the Kashgar Kirghiz militia commander, who accompanied us, showed that he was prepared to arrange matters satisfactorily with them. We had seen large droves of horses and ponies grazing near the last camp, and we learnt that the Naryn Kazaks and Kirghiz came over annually with about five thousand of these for winter pasture in Kashgar territory, paying revenue to the Atalik. The Kazaks

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pressed round us while we passed along to the lake, and we had ample opportunity to observe them and their horses. The latter were stout, well-made animals, much resembling Welsh ponies in appearance, and both they and their riders looked enduring and hardy to a degree. Our Kirghiz escort were on good terms with them, and had no difficulty in keeping them from taking too close an interest in us, which at first they were inclined to do.

We saw on this journey, for the first time, the *Ovis Poli*, Marco Polo's wild sheep, hitherto regarded as a half-mythical animal, and I suffered a cruel disappointment in my first stalk of some fine rams, by having three fingers of my right hand partly frost-bitten, before I could use my rifle with effect. I was cautiously creeping and crawling round the summit of a high ridge, and lay down for half an hour watching the sheep moving slowly about in a hollow near me. I was so eager and intent on the stalk that I would not move my hand, which was ungloved, and stretched out on the rifle barrels, lest the sheep should notice me; and on seeing a chance to fire, I found my hand and fingers benumbed and useless. This spoilt my shot, and my chagrin was great at the chance I lost. The cold was intense then, and that night the thermometer marked 26° Fahr. below zero outside, and 8½° Fahr. below zero inside our felt tent, pitched in a sheltered spot under the ridge. Being unable to use my rifle the next day, I told the sportsmen of the Kirghiz escort to try their luck, and accompanying them on my pony, I saw them bring down with their matchlocks a ram and a ewe, which gave a supply of meat for the camp. This wild mutton was good and pleasant to the taste, with a slight flavour of venison.

On the way up from Kashgar we made the acquaintance of Mahmud Beg, the "Lord of the Standard," in command of the frontier posts and fort

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of Chakmak, who welcomed us warmly and treated us most hospitably. Here we had roomy, comfortable quarters, a very pleasant change from the small, tattered felt tent, admitting a distressing amount of cold, in which we had passed the previous night. Mahmud Beg knew some Russian officers, and on learning who we were, took a great interest in our doings. We again passed the night in his fort on the return journey, and on hearing of our disappointment in shooting no wild sheep or ibex, he showed us a stored winter supply of frozen meat for the garrison, consisting of over fifty *Ovis Poli* and ibex which had been shot by the Kirghiz militia attached to his command. There were some very fine "heads" among them, and he asked our acceptance of the *nine* carcasses complete, which we might select. *Nine* is their mystic or lucky number. We made an assorted selection for specimen purposes of males and females, and all were sent after us to Kashgar, laden on great, long-haired Bactrian camels. They were unfrozen there under Dr Stoliczka's directions, and treated scientifically as rare natural history specimens. Some of them were eventually presented to the British Museum, and are now in the Natural History Branch in South Kensington. It was afterwards found that the Tian Shan wild sheep is the *Ovis Karelini*, a species somewhat smaller than the true *Ovis Poli* which frequents the Pamirs, and of which I shall tell later.

It was very necessary to walk warily during this our first exploring journey, as we saw that any indication of a desire to evade or ignore the Atalik Ghazi's authority would be fatal to the measure of liberty we did enjoy, and the assistance we received. Accordingly we got on well with the officials who accompanied us, nominally to help, but really to observe closely and report, and this no doubt turned the scale in our favour when the question of the Pamir journey to the Oxus

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GULJA BASHI (WILD SHEEP'S HAUNT), TIAN SHAN MOUNTAINS
(*Ovis Poli* or *Karelini*.)

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and Wakhan was discussed. It was known that the return of our messenger from Kabul with the Amir's answer was awaited with some anxiety, and the Atalik considered that the Mission should proceed to Yarkand, and there wait. From recent reports we knew that this would be fatal to our hopes and plans of reaching the Pamir, and gaining the important geographical and other information so much desired. Our envoy therefore proposed that I should go forward with three members of the Mission to meet the messenger, while he remained at Yarkand. Permission was accordingly obtained for my party to proceed as far as Tashkurgan, Sirikol, and then, taking advantage of this concession, we revealed our great wish to visit the "Bam-i-Dunya" (Roof of the World), lying just beyond, that being the name given by the ancient geographers to the high plateaux and mountain lands between Eastern and Western Turkistan; and it greatly encouraged me in my hope of success to hear the Atalik say, at the farewell interview on 16th March, to our friend, Yakub Khan Tora, when the subject of the Pamir journey was mentioned, "Colonel Sahib naghz adam dir," which is Tūrki for "The Colonel is a good (safe) man."

Surgeon-Major Bellew, the medical officer of the Mission, and myself were the Persian interpreters—Persian being the *lingua franca* of Central Asia, while Tūrki (Turkish) in dialect form is the domestic tongue. Dr Bellew was a first-rate Oriental linguist, and while he gained considerable proficiency in Tūrki, which we both studied on the journey to, and during our stay at Kashgar, I became sufficiently conversant with it to follow and understand an easy conversation. Captain Trotter of the Royal Engineers, who was the scientific geographer with the Mission, also learnt Tūrki to the extent of ascertaining the correct names of places, rivers, and mountains. He was thus at an advantage over the Russian traveller, concerning whom the

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following story was told by a lecturer before the Geographical Society in St Petersburg, when speaking of the great difficulty in finding general names for mountain ranges in Central Asia. The traveller in question had had many names given to him by the interpreter, through whom he was questioning the native guide regarding the general name of the whole range at which they were looking. The various names given to him were those of the several passes over the range, and he indicated by a sweep of his arm that he wanted the common name for the whole range. What was it? The interpreter was as weary of the repeated questioning as the guide, and on the latter answering in despair, "Khuda bilador" (God knows), the eager traveller insisted on the interpreter giving the words exactly as spoken, and gravely noted down, the "Khuda Bilador" (God knows) mountains. We also were very keen questioners, wishing to know all about everything and everybody. On one occasion, Dr Bellew was trying to get information from one of the Yarkand people sent with us to Kashgar on our first arrival in the country, and as the accompanying Mirza spy reporters with the party were always suspecting and watching us, he overheard one of them say to the Yarkandi in Turkish, "What is the Firangi talking to you about?" and on being told, ordered him not to give the information asked. "But," said the man, "he asks, and he asks, what am I to say?" "Oh, tell him lies," was the answer. Bellew took no notice, but went on talking and questioning, generally managing to pick out the grain from the chaff.

The object of Haji Tora's special mission to Constantinople was to obtain the sacred sanction and protection of the Head of Islam to the Atalik's authority and position, as Champion of the Faith and Sovereign of Kashgar. The mission was successful, and two

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days after our arrival at the capital (where we were received in audience on the first day) the Atalik paid a visit to the Shrine of Hazrat Afak, the patron saint of the country, and returned the next day, with the style and title of Amir Mahomed Yakub Khan, *Amir-ul-muminin*, or "Commander of the Faithful." A Court was held, and the Amir received the congratulations of his troops on the dignity and honour conferred on him by the representative head of the "Faithful." Shortly after, at the festival of the "Id Kurbān," public announcement was made of the Turkish Protectorate, the Sultan's name was ordered to be used in the "Khutba," or prayer for the reigning sovereign, at all the mosques; coin was struck bearing the Sultan's name, Abdul Aziz Khan, and purporting to be issued from the mint of "the protected State of Kashgar"; and gold "tillas" (value about ten shillings) of the new coinage were distributed in *largesse* to the troops and Court attendants.

Our treaty negotiations being satisfactorily concluded we had the final formal interview with the Atalik on the 16th March previous to our departure from the capital the following day. We were his honoured guests from first to last while within his territory, and were everywhere well received by the people. At one of our previous interviews, on Mr Forsyth mentioning the good services rendered to us by certain high officials, the Atalik said in reply: "Every one is ready to serve my guests, be he Tora or Khoja, Dadkhwah or Moulla" (prince or priest, governor or scribe). It was this pronounced goodwill which enabled my party to travel to the Oxus with but a nominal escort.

Our Mission left Kashgar on the 17th March 1874, and we were assured by Yakub Khan Tora, who accompanied us part of the way on the first day's journey, that the Pamir trip for my party would be sanctioned by the Amir (that being the title which had

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lately been given to the Atalik by the Sultan of Turkey). We reached Yangi Hissar the following day, and there awaited the Amir's orders. In anticipation of permission, we sent off Resaldar Mahomed Afzal Khan of the 11th Bengal Lancers, with a trooper of the escort, bearing letters to the Governor of Sirikol, and Mir Fateh Ali Shah, Chief of Wakhan, to announce my coming. The Kashgar authorities also gave confirmatory letters. I was kept in suspense, however, to the very last, as the final order from the Amir only arrived from Kashgar on the morning of the 21st. I had made all the necessary arrangements for departure on the shortest notice, and my party left at once, marching 19 miles that day. My companions were Captain Biddulph, 19th Hussars, Captain Trotter, Royal Engineers, and Dr (ph.) Stoliczka, of the Geological Survey Department, and four picked men of the Guide Corps escort also accompanied us. We started on this journey at the most unfavourable time of the year for exploration work on the Pamir highlands, but as it was a matter of no choice, and of the work being done then or probably never by us, advantage was naturally taken of the only opportunity which offered.

The signs of approaching spring were showing when we left Yangi Hissar on the Kashgar plain, but we found ourselves almost in mid-winter immediately on entering the hills. The streams were frozen, and deep snow lay everywhere, while fresh falls were frequent the whole way to Wakhan, and during our stay there. The baggage pony drivers, whom we had engaged at Kashgar for our transport train, objected strongly to this return to severe winter weather, and on the third day after leaving Yangi Hissar struck work, and refused to proceed any further. I argued quietly with them, but to no purpose, whereupon I called upon our accompanying Kashgar official, a

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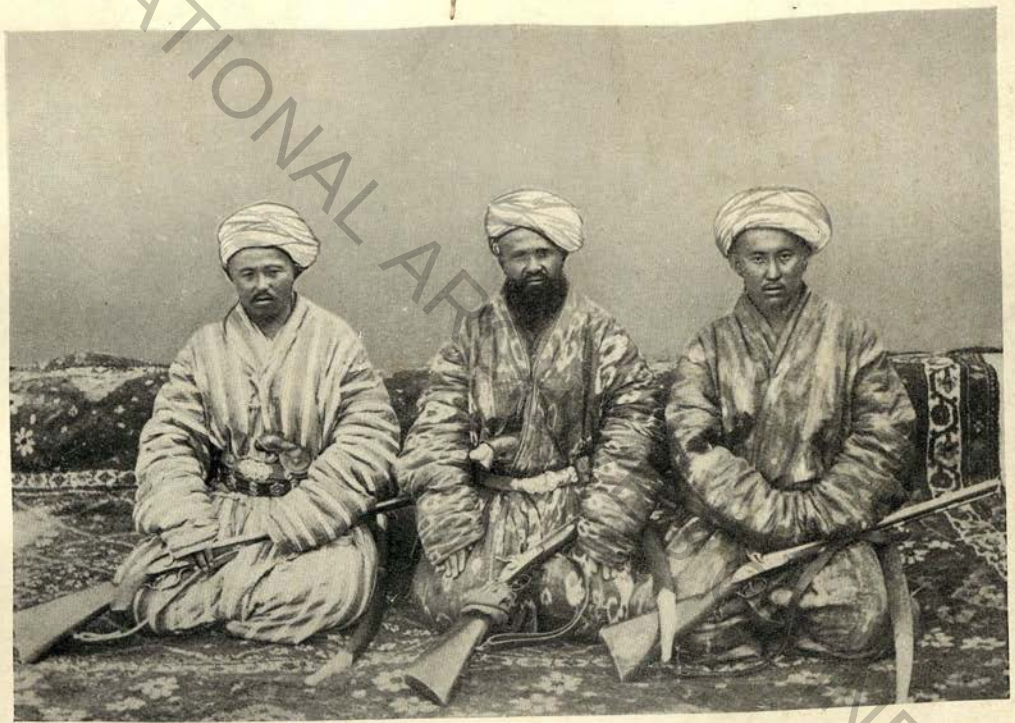

YUZBASHI RUSTUM (CAPT. HERCULES) AND HIS A.B. SUBALTERNS. [*To face page* 110.

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Yuzbashi (captain), appropriately named Rustum (the Persian Hercules), for assistance. He promptly replied by literally taking them in hand, and convincing them, by the strong argument of the whip, that they were bound to go as far on the journey as himself. And he held them to this understanding fourteen days later when they again struck work. On reaching Sarhadd, the first village in Wakhan, whence the Sirikol people who had accompanied us from Tashkurgan were to return, the same Kashgari baggage drivers declared their intention to go back with them, and refused to saddle and load up the ponies for our onward journey. Here, again, our Captain Hercules intervened with his powerfully persuasive ways, and in his masterful manner impressed upon the ringleaders so forcibly the necessity of remaining with him, as had been previously promised, that they gave no further trouble. This violent scene took place in a blinding snowstorm, accompanied by a wind so intense in its coldness as to freeze the driven snowflakes on our faces.

We had hoped for an improvement in the weather when we should descend into Wakhan, but it increased in severity, and for three days after leaving Sarhadd, heavy snowstorms compelled slow progress. The freezing wind and great cold drove us to seek shelter in the houses of the villagers, and gave us opportunities of observing their domestic life. Money has a very high value in Wakhan, and the present of a gold piece, a tilla—value ten shillings—in return for a night's lodging, was regarded as lavish generosity. They all spoke Persian in addition to their own peculiar dialect, and my proficiency in that tongue seemed to interest them much. The Wakhis as a people are unusually good-looking, and we saw many faces of extreme regularity of feature. Fair hair is not uncommon. They have the tradition of their descent from Greek soldiers and Persian followers of the army

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of Alexander the Great, and, like the inhabitants of all the neighbouring small principalities, they belong to the Shiah Mahomedan Ismaili sect, who acknowledge the Agha Khan of Bombay as their spiritual head. Their Persian origin is very evident, and the people of Shighnan, one of the Oxus principalities lower down, say that their country is called Labnan in the Gulistan of Sheikh Sadi of Shiraz. The women do not veil, and appear to have more control in the household than is usually the case in the East. They have a wide reputation for good looks, and, like the Circassian beauties, find their way by sale into the households of wealthy Uzbegs, Afghans, and others. The Koran is said to justify the enslavement of the heretic Shiah Mahomedan by the orthodox Sunni, in order that the accursed sinner may be led back to the way of spiritual salvation.

It would be superfluous to relate the details of our Pamir journey in this memoir, as the official Mission report, and my "Roof of the World," published in 1875-76, gave a full account of it and our exploration work. I wish, however, to tell of the hospitality we received from the Kashgar officials, the welcome given to us in Wakhan, and the assistance rendered by the chief of that small principality on the Oxus, without whose help we could not have secured the success we had in our return journey. The Resaldar, Mahomed Afzul Khan, who preceded our party, informed all whom he met, in such a favourable manner, of our approach, that we were able to overcome all difficulties with comparative ease. I have mentioned the messenger sent to Kabul with a letter to the Amir Sher Ali Khan from our envoy, requesting permission for the Mission to return to India by way of Badakhshan and Kabul. He left us at Kashgar on 31st December 1873, and reached his destination on 16th February 1874. He was kept waiting for the Amir's reply

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till the middle of April, but in the meantime His Highness' public remarks in open Durbar were more than sufficient to show that his consent to the journey would not be given. And we were fully warned of this by letters from Ibrahim Khan, and also from Ata Mahomed Khan, the representative agent of the Government of India at the Amir's Court. Information to the same effect was also sent by special messenger from India, and I was aware, when we reached Sarhadd in Wakhan, that my very explicit and binding instructions would not permit of our passing beyond that small state. The letters which I received for Mr Forsyth from Ibrahim Khan told of approaching disturbances, and that the Amir was "quietly preparing an army for the purpose of threatening the Hakim of Herat" (his eldest son, Yakub). In course of time, the Amir's tardy answer to Mr Forsyth's letter was received, to the effect that it was inadvisable for the Mission to return to India *vid* Badakhshan. I took my party 55 miles down from Sarhadd to Kila Panja on the Oxus, the capital of Wakhan, the only place where I could refit for a return journey to Yarkand. After travelling for twenty days in deep snow distances of 20 to 25 miles a day, the horses were sadly in want of a rest, for besides the severity of the work, they had necessarily to be at times on short allowance of corn and fodder.

With the exception of Wakhan, which is Afghan, our journeys lay entirely in the territories of the Maharajah of Kashmir and the Amir of Kashgar, and the fortunate advantage of the goodwill of both these potentates attended us throughout. The only doubtful time was when we were traversing the Pamirs beyond Kashgar territory, and yet we felt perfectly safe there under the protection of the Atalik, for we were his guests till we reached the first villages in Wakhan.

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Nothing could exceed the hospitality and kindness we received on this difficult journey. We and our whole establishment were well supplied with provisions, and on arrival at each day's halting-place, even on the wild and desolate Pamir lands, we were always welcomed with a repast of some sort, prepared by people sent ahead for the purpose. The Atalik was then in the zenith of his power, and his arm was considered to be long enough and strong enough to reach in reprisal the Wakhis, Kirghiz, and Kanjutis who frequent the Pamirs in summer. Befriended by him, I regarded our small guard of four men of the Guide Corps, with five Kashgari soldiers under the centurion, Yuzbashi Rustum, who accompanied us the whole way, as quite sufficient for our safety, and I declined the strong escort which, in accordance with orders from Kashgar, was offered to me at Tashkurgan, to take my party to Wakhan. I saw that further numbers would only add to the difficulties of transport and supplies, and that we were safe enough with the Atalik's prestige in our favour. I was well provided with gold, and whenever it was a matter of payment for supplies or services, this was done promptly and liberally.

It is a singular fact that the sight of a well-equipped ammunition pony, with its neat load of two iron-bound cases containing Snider cartridges, escorted by two Guide Corps sepoys, was a talisman of safety. It was regarded as our treasury of gold coin, in which all who helped us had a common interest, and as we were passed on with guaranteed good wishes from one boundary to another, this common interest gave a popular protection. On our return journey, near Yarkand, this "treasure" pony was swept down a swollen stream into a deep pool where, in the course of the efforts to save it and its load, one of the ammunition boxes slipped and sank into the depths: I accepted the loss, but the attendant Yarkandis seemed

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THE "TREASURE PONY" TALISMAN, WITH HIS GUIDE CORPS GUARDS.

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to take particular notice of the spot, and doubtless the place was eagerly visited, with the object of getting the gold, when the stream fell low enough to admit of the box being recovered.

But, of course, the primary influence which secured our safety on the Pamirs was the wholesome fear in which the Atalik was held. His prestige was such that it gave rise to the report, that the object of my journey to Wakhan with a Kashgari escort was to demand the surrender of Mir Wali Khan, ex-Chief of Yassin, the alleged murderer of Mr Hayward, who had found asylum with the Mir of that state. We afterwards learnt that our visit to Kila Panja on the Oxus, where the Mir of Wakhan resides, had the effect of causing Mir Wali to leave that place, and eventually was the indirect means of avenging Hayward's death, as I shall now explain.

Resaldar Mahomed Afzul Khan, who was sent on to Wakhan to prepare for our arrival there, found the Mir at first reluctant to receive us. A report had gone abroad that the real object of our visit was to seize and carry off Mir Wali Khan. Mr Hayward, the bold and adventurous traveller who penetrated to Kashgar in 1868, at the same time as Mr Shaw, was disappointed in his design of passing thence to the Pamir, and after his return to India proceeded to make the attempt by the Gilgit and Yassin (Upper Chitral) route, and was brutally murdered by Mir Wali, acting under the orders of the Chitral Chief, whose vassal he was, at the foot of the Darkote pass, about 20 miles from Sarhadd, Wakhan. Poor Hayward was believed to be in possession of a considerable amount of money and valuable presents for the chiefs beyond Yassin, and the desire to obtain these, as well as the Chitral ruler's wish to have the traveller killed, appear to have induced Mir Wali to commit the infamous act. Aman-ul-Mulk, the Chitral ruler

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and father-in-law of Mir Wali, on hearing of the strong indignation the crime had caused, promptly expressed his intention to slay his son-in-law, and despatched a force to seize him; but Mir Wali escaped to Wakhan, where he found a protector in the Chief, Mir Fateh Ali Shah. His Mirship (patrimony) was confiscated and conferred on his cousin, Pahlvan Khan, a nephew of Aman-ul-Mulk. About two years later he was restored to his father-in-law's favour and reappointed ruler of Yassin. His return to power there, on the border of Kashmir territory, produced an impression which in course of time had its effect in again causing alarm to the suspected Chitral Chief, who, a second time, sent Pahlwan Khan to seize his cousin, which meant killing him. But as before, Mir Wali got timely information and escaped to Wakhan, where he remained until my party was on the point of arrival, when he left for Faizabad in Badakhshan. After a short stay there he ventured to Chitral again and threw himself on his father-in-law's mercy; but Aman-ul-Mulk, in the hope of satisfying the cry for vengeance and removing suspicion from himself, caused him to be put in the path of his successful rival and cousin, Pahlvan Khan, who effectually disposed of him under secret instructions, just as Mir Wali had done when Hayward was murdered. This took place about four months after our arrival in Wakhan. Aman-ul-Mulk tried to obtain credit to himself for this further cold-blooded crime by announcing it in a letter to the Commissioner of Peshawar, for communication to the Viceroy of India, as an act of stern justice on his part, in righteous judgment for the murder of the English traveller. He had become alarmed for his own safety, knowing of the persistent recollection of the crime as one which called for vengeance when opportunity should offer; and the exaggerated story of Englishmen with a strong escort having appeared at the back of the mountains made him fear some mysterious danger to himself.

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CHAPTER V

(1874)

We arrived at Kila Panja in the heart of Central Asia on 13th April, being met when riding in by Mir Fateh Ali Shah, who welcomed us to his poor country, and expressed his desire to make our stay as pleasant as its severe climate and limited comforts would permit. We paid a ceremonial visit to him in his fort-dwelling that evening, and presented gifts from the British Envoy, which seemed to please him much. We were regarded with great curiosity, as no European, dressed and known as such, had been seen there since 1838, when Wood, the traveller, came on his way to the Great Pamir lake; and he was the first since Marco Polo's time in 1272, for it is probable that Benedict Goës, who came in 1602, was not recognised as a Firangi. The Mir's reception room was exceedingly comfortless in its extreme simplicity, having but one opening above for light and smoke, and everything was rough except manners, which were singularly good. We saw the unusual sight in the East of respect paid by kissing the hand, the people, on being admitted to the Mir's presence, kissing his hand, and doing the same on departure. In the course of conversation regarding his country the Mir said with quiet conceit he was descended from Alexander of Macedon, and that the ruling families of the neighbouring principalities took their origin from his ancestors; but this, we afterwards heard, is

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what each says of the others who similarly pride themselves on direct descent from the great Iskandar.

I had noticed among the people some faces of a marked Grecian type, and on describing in a letter our experiences when severe snowstorms compelled us to seek shelter in the villages, I said that in one house where we lodged the night we saw some interesting "Greek remains"—the members of the family having regular Grecian features—and that I had made a sketch of the group. The gentleman to whom I wrote this, knew the story of the alleged ancestry of the Wakhan people, but he also had a knowledge of the Greek antiquities of sculpture and art found in Northern India, and a hope that some such might be found by us on the Upper Oxus. The contents of my letter were communicated to a learned Society in a disjointed form, and the "Greek remains" were taken to mean antiquities similar to those in Northern India. Some time passed before the misconception was explained, and the assurance received that there was no intention to hoax. But in the meantime the mistake was repeated in a *resumé* from the "Papers of the Russian Geographical Society, No. 1 of 1875," by O. A. Fedchenko, the Central Asian traveller, entitled "From Kashgar to Kila Panja," in which it was stated of our travels in Wakhan: "Among the results it may be mentioned that in a hut in which they passed the night, Gordon found and copied some very interesting Greek antiquities."

On the day following our arrival at Kila Panja, the Mir came to my tent to say that he had received a letter from Hafizulla Khan, the Governor and Commander of the Afghan troops at Faizabad, Badakhshan, who had heard of our expected arrival in Wakhan, directing him to treat us well, and to send us on as his honoured guests. I informed him

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GREEK "REMAINS" IN THE BASIN OF THE UPPER OXUS.

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of my official instructions, on which he said that I was my own master, and he would do as I wished. I then arranged to send my invaluable assistant, Resaldar Mahomed Afzul, to Faizabad with letters to the Governor there, and also to Mahomed Alim Khan, the Governor-General of Badakhshan and Balkh, informing them of my arrival at Kila Panja, and intention to return to Yarkand after a rest there of ten or twelve days. I sent presents with the letters and received pleasant replies, expressing regret at my inability to accept their invitation to proceed. The Resaldar rode to Faizabad and back (280 miles) in eight days, taking only a rest of one day there. He brought back a very much needed supply of horse-shoes, for as I had seventy-two horses with my party, including those of the Kashgar officials who accompanied me, Kila Panja could not supply our wants at short notice.

We learnt that the refusal on the part of the Amir Sher Ali to welcome the Mission on its return journey was entirely due to his unfriendliness, arising partly from the disinclination of the British Government to fall in with his views as to the succession in favour of Abdullah Jan. He had in consequence quarrelled with his eldest and popular son, Yakub, the Governor of Herat, and was drifting towards open rupture with the British Government. Yakub's enemies whispered to the Amir that he should be summoned to Kabul before he was induced to seek the aid of Russia, which was more likely to be given while he remained in power at Herat. Sher Ali recognised this danger all the more because he knew that Yakub, under such circumstances, would have the sympathies of more than half the kingdom. He saw that Russia would thus have two strings to her bow of antagonism to himself. In the north he saw Abdul Rahman waiting at Samarkand for his

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opportunity, and keeping up his influence over Badakhshan; and with Yakub hostile in the west, he was persuaded that his provinces in the north and west, if not the south as well, might fall away to rivals under Russian influence, and that for self-preservation it was necessary to throw himself into the arms of Russia. The fullest advantage was taken by intriguers of Sher Ali's personal feeling against the British Government and his eldest son, Yakub. The conquest of Khiva and the rapid approach of Russia to the Oxus had caused the Afghans to reflect on the march of events. The general idea was given out that Russia was the rising power, that she was destined to advance still further; that England was afraid of her, and would do nothing to oppose her progress, or to help those who would preserve themselves from being swallowed up; consequently they (the Afghans) should consult as to the wisdom of making friends with the coming Power. The state of affairs at the Court of Kabul at that time favoured this line of policy.

During our stay at Kila Panja, ample corroborative information was obtained regarding the movements of Russian agents, and showing that whilst English merchants were not allowed to enter Afghanistan, Russian caravans were given free and favoured passage. The plain truth was forced upon us that British influence in Kabul was lessening, and Russian influence increasing. We afterwards learnt that Yakub had been repeatedly invited to visit Kabul, but, warned by his many well-wishers of the fate awaiting him, he contrived by plausible excuses to remain at his post. Sher Ali was reluctant to press matters to such a length as direct disobedience to his formal order, and while appearing to accept the excuse urged by Yakub from time to time, that public affairs made absence from Herat inconvenient, he

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persistently continued to notify his wish to see his son at Kabul. A game of political hide-and-seek was thus played for about three years after Sher Ali's return from the meeting with the Viceroy of India in 1869, till, seeing that the longer Yakub remained free the stronger he became in the public mind, the Amir became despotically impatient, and formally summoned him to Kabul. Yakub then saw that all worth living for, if not life itself, would be sacrificed, and he declined to obey. On this the Amir proclaimed the Governor of Herat a rebel in active revolt, and gave orders for an army to proceed against him. The brave and generous son shrank from armed resistance to his father—the Amir, the Commander of the Faithful, the Head of Islam in Afghanistan—and he offered to present himself dutifully at Kabul, if promised personal safety and honourable treatment. Sher Ali appeared to welcome his son's submission, and he despatched a high dignitary to Herat, accompanied by a Moulla, bearing a copy of the Holy Koran, on which Sher Ali had taken solemn oath to receive his son kindly, and treat him well. Yakub, trusting to his father's sacred oath, proceeded to Kabul, where, on arrival, he was received with insult, and cast into prison.

The Amir of Kabul, as the State Head of Islam, claims to be under spiritual guidance in his acts, and Sher Ali was a firm believer in the "divine rights of kings." Being priest as well as king, he had no shame or diffidence in declaring that as he could do no wrong, his treatment of Yakub was justified by being for the good of the nation. He spoke of his "God-granted Government" requiring the highest self-sacrifice from the ruler, and the thorough effacement of all personal feeling, in obedience to divine duty and command. This is quite in accordance with the old traditional principle among the Afghan tribesmen, that the interests of the community are paramount, and that to secure the

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common welfare the end justifies the means. But this principle is of such general application in all matters—personal and private as well as public—in Kabul, that it has produced the saying, "As treacherous as an Afghan."

The Mir of Wakhan affected not to understand my wish to return by the Great Pamir route, and urged me to go back by the road we came. He said that the caravans never took the Great Pamir route till June, as the snow lay long and deep on that high tract. He assured me that we would not be able to pass that way without serious loss, as there was the fact before us of the winter being extraordinarily late that year. I added the persuasion of a gift of golden tillas (current all over Central Asia) to my urgent request, and he consented to allow one of my men to accompany two of his as far as the Great Lake (Victoria Lake), to report on the depth of snow; and they returned in eight days, bringing such an account as induced me to determine on trying that route. But for the considerable assistance of a number of fresh horses and food supplies for our large party (for which liberal payment was forthcoming), the Mir had yet to be further conciliated, and this I managed by the public presentation to him of an oxydised silver casket, filled with tillas such as I had already given privately. I asked him to examine the figured work on the casket (which I had placed before him, and which he had not handled), and in doing so, feeling the weight, he opened it, saw the golden contents, and shut it quickly, placing it quietly by his side. His Divan Begi (Vazir) came to him by sign, and took possession of the casket, putting it within the breast folds of his capacious sheep-skin robe, bound securely at the waist, and resumed his place in the circle. The Mir then announced his intention to assist me to his utmost, not only on the journey over the Great Pamir, but also in giving guides for Captain Biddulph's

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visit to the Baroghil and other passes leading to Chitral, Mastuj, and Yassin, from Sarhadd. The Diwan Begi had privately informed me that the Mir was in great pecuniary difficulties, having a State debt of about £45, on which account he was entirely in the clutches of a merciless money-lender. I promised to pay off this national debt, with a liberal margin over, if the Mir would in public undertake to assist me in my travelling plans. This was done, and I took advantage of the occasion to state that all supplies and services would be scrupulously paid for.

We left Kila Panja on 26th April (1874) in two parties: Captain Biddulph, with the Resaldar Mahomed Afzul Khan, proceeding by the lower route to examine the Chitral passes, while Captain Trotter, Dr Stoliczka and I went by the upper or Great Pamir route. Both parties agreed to meet at a spot in the Aktash valley on 4th May, and we, the Great Pamir party, made a long march that day of 37 miles through much snow to keep the engagement. Biddulph succeeded well in the object of his journey, and made valuable additions to the results of our exploration work. My party followed Wood's track up to the Great Pamir lake, and thence, Marco Polo's of six centuries before, we being the first European travellers to pass along the Great Pamir, east of the lake, since A.D. 1272. Captain Biddulph afterwards became the first British Political Agent at Gilgit, and was able to continue the exploration of the passes from the south, which he had begun so well from the north.

Up to the time of our visit to Central Asia the *Ovis Poli* was almost considered to be of doubtful existence, and I was glad to have it in my power to present to the British Museum the first specimen of the grand head of this gigantic wild sheep seen in its Natural History Department. I found it at Lake Victoria on the Great Pamir, along with another fine head, which latter I

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caused to be securely fixed in a natural niche on a great upstanding boulder, facing the west whence we had journeyed, and I asked the Wakhi guides to regard it as the sign of our visit to the Great Lake; with them the large horns of wild sheep and goats are fixed on housetops and above doorways for purposes of memorial, and they well understood my meaning in setting up the *Ovis Poli* head at the Great Pamir lake.

We saw the horns of *Ovis Poli* and *Ibex* lying in numbers on the Pamirs, and were told that these animals suffer heavily from the wolves and snow leopards which prey upon them in winter. The head which I gave to the Museum has horns measuring 65½ inches in length along the curve, 53 inches in a straight line across from tip to tip, and 16 inches round the base. A pen-and-ink sketch of it was shown with my other drawings at the Geographical Congress Exhibition in Paris in 1875, and its accuracy was there challenged by M. Severtzoff, the well-known Russian Naturalist traveller, who ascribed much of its beauty of form to my imagination. This opinion was communicated to me, whereupon I sent a photograph of the head to compare with the sketch, and its accuracy was then duly acknowledged. A sight of the head shows that in this instance art cannot improve on Nature.

I was not greatly surprised at M. Severtzoff's hesitation to accept my sketch as a true representation of the head, for on my first visit to the British Museum a few weeks previously, to inform Dr Günther, the learned Chief of the Natural History Department, that I desired to present an *Ovis Poli* head of remarkable dimensions to the Museum, he, while listening with courtesy and interest to my description of it, seemed to be very much less struck with my account of its exceptional size and beauty of form than I had expected. He explained that they had a Pamir head of the *Ovis Poli* class in the Museum, and he took

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OVIS POLI HORNS, FROM THE GREAT PAMIR.

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me to see a small specimen of an Altai wild sheep, the sight of which led me again to speak enthusiastically of the head I desired to add to the National Collections. The scientific naturalist appeared to regard me as a traveller and sportsman with an imagination which might lighten a detailed and probably monotonous account of my journey over the "Roof of the World," for he expressed a hope that should I write a book concerning my travels, there would be plenty of incident and adventure in it. I said I felt amused to think that a professor, concerned with exact knowledge and scientific facts, should encourage the production of "travellers' tales." I then wrote a letter to the Museum Trustees stating my wish to present the head, and requesting that it might be placed in a prominent position. This was before the Natural History Museum was built in South Kensington, and when the galleries were so crowded with specimens that I feared the *Ovis Poli* head might be put where it could not be seen well. I was aware that the cellars were then full of cases containing many valuable specimens for which space above was not available. A few days after the head was delivered, I called again on Dr Günther, and was greatly amused to find him so infected with my enthusiasm, that he laughed at the idea of my fear lest the *Ovis Poli* head should not be put in a prominent position. He carried me off at once downstairs to where the carpenter was busy on a stand for it, and it was my turn to listen to almost rapturous praise of the unique specimen. Even the carpenter joined in admiration of its size, shape, and weight, and taking it in his arms, said it was a load for a man, and yet a sheep carried it easily. It was clear to me that the learned doctor had suspected me in the first instance as Severtzoff did.

Later, I had to listen to a greater sceptic, who,

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unaware of my identity, began by doubting whether my party had reached Lake Victoria on the Great Pamir, whence I brought the big *Ovis Poli* head, and ended by expressing a decided opinion that we had made a mistake in thinking it was the Great Pamir we had visited. This occurred at a little dinner at the Junior United Service Club in 1876, when the late General Sir Charles Macgregor invited me to meet two distinguished staff officers from the War Office. Towards the end of dinner the conversation turned on the Royal Geographical Society's medals which had been lately awarded, and allusion was made to the exploration work recently carried out by members of the Kashgar Mission. One of the staff officers belonged to the department which is charged with geographical information, and he referred to Captain Trotter[1] of the Royal Engineers, who was the geographer with my party, as not having done anything remarkable, inasmuch as he had neither reached Victoria Lake nor the Great Pamir. Macgregor laughed and said: "Gordon here should know; he was the leader of the party; he too says he was there, and his 'Roof of the World,' published last week, tells the story." The sceptical staff officer, who had been so positive, was rather upset on hearing this, for when we were introduced to one another he had failed to catch my name, and after recovering from the awkwardness produced by his positiveness, he expressed surprise at our exploration work on the Pamirs being so little known. But there was no excuse for his want of knowledge on that point, as full reports were sent to the War Office in the end of 1874, and there was correspondence relating to them in 1875.

Previous to leaving Kila Panja I had written to Hussun Shah, the "Lord of the Standard" in command

[1] Captain Trotter was awarded the Royal Geographical Society's Victoria Medal in 1878 for exploration work in Turkistan.

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at Tashkurgan, Sirikol, informing him of my proposed return to Yarkand, and asking that supplies of food and forage should be sent to a named place in the Aktash valley to meet us, as I could not expect to carry more than sufficient to take my party so far. This official had received us so well on the way over, and had made such good arrangements for our journey, that I felt quite confident of his friendly assistance again. I was not disappointed, and found his people at the place indicated ready with the supplies, and also baggage yaks to help us over the mountain pass into Sirikol. He was glad to see us back safe, and suggested that the letter of acknowledgment of good services rendered, which I proposed to send to the Atalik at Kashgar, should go through him. To this I assented, and on sending the Resaldar, who was my Persian secretary for the occasion, to enquire regarding the proper form of superscription for my letter, he asked to have the letter read to him. This was done, and he at once took strong exception to the fact that, figuratively, I did not go down on my knees, and rub my forehead on the ground many times before the Presence; that I did not cover much paper space with prostrations and adorations, and approach the subject of my letter with humility, hesitation, and fear. The Resaldar explained that this was not my style of writing, and all I wanted was a highly complimentary form of address. The Governor came to my tent to argue and implore, and finally to say that instead of doing him a favour by my letter, I would do him an injury, as he would be blamed for my defective style of letter-writing to one of such high dignity. We then compromised by the letter being addressed to my friend the Haji Tora, the Pilgrim Prince, to be read to the Atalik. The Governor at first was doubtful about this, as he said the Atalik's command required all reports and communications to be addressed to himself direct,

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as he allowed no one to stand between him and those in authority. He described him as a suspicious autocrat who trusted no one. I explained that he knew our ways, however, and would clearly understand my letter to mean high respect and deep gratitude. Hussan Shah (the Governor) was a native of Kharategin, one of the Upper Oxus principalities, and, as he knew Persian well, he and I were able to carry on this interesting talk without the presence of an interpreter.

The Governor went back to his castle reassured that all was well, but the next day I was again the innocent cause of further mental anxiety to him. I found myself in the morning completely floored by a severe attack of muscular rheumatism, which caught me between the shoulder-blades, and took away for a short time power of speech and movement, except with great effort and pain. The Governor heard an exaggerated account of this, and came to our camp in great unhappiness of mind to enquire as to my state. He told the Resaldar that it would be most unfortunate for him if anything serious were to happen to me whilst under his immediate protection, and he was most earnest in his offer to help me in every way on the journey so that there should be no delay in my departure from Sirikol. I comforted him by telling him of a worse attack I had in Wakhan, notwithstanding which I roused myself to go a short day's journey in a violent snowstorm with an indiarubber hot-water bottle (which I showed him, as I was then using it to relieve pain) tied on my back to enable me to mount my pony and make a start. He found me lying on the floor of the tent as the hollow of my camp bed produced a bending of the back which was too painful to allow of rest. I left the next day with the Governor's best wishes for my journey to Yarkand, and travelling by the easy stages, which were necessary for other reasons, I soon recovered from the rheumatism.

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The envoy (Mr Forsyth) and his party, who remained at Yangi Hissar and Yarkand while we were away on the Pamir journey, had proceeded on the return to India when they heard of our safe arrival at Tashkurgan, Sirikol. We travelled to Yarkand in very different weather from that which prevailed on our upward journey: the places which were then "burnt up" with frost we found now in full summer foliage and verdure, for in those regions spring bursts forth suddenly, and soon jumps into summer. We seemed to pass at once from the deep winter cold of the Pamir highlands to hot summer heat in the Yarkand plain. The wheat was high, and the barley was beginning to show in ear, while the fruits were large on the trees, and the mulberries were actually ripe. Vegetation was being rapidly forced by copious irrigation, and an atmosphere heated even throughout the night. The water everywhere was thick and brown with a fertilising fine soil, and our drinking and cooking supply had to be obtained by melting clear ice, of which every village stores large quantities in deep pits, for the preservation of fruit and general cooling use in the summer months.

We reached Yarkand on the 21st May, and halted there a week to rest our tired horses, dispose of those unfit for the severe Karakoram journey still before us, and purchase and hire others to complete our train. The Governor and his officials were kind and hospitable to the utmost, and we continued to be treated as honoured guests to the last, till the frontier at Aktagh was reached. I was, of course, duly attentive and complimentary in communicating the thanks of myself and my party to the Atalik for our successful journey. I also wrote to the Governor of Sirikol, and told him of my arrival at Yarkand and departure for India. We liberally rewarded the Yuzbashi Rustum (Hercules) and his men, and also the Kashgari baggage pony

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drivers who accompanied us on the journey to the Oxus and back. The latter, notwithstanding their "strikes" of which I have told, behaved well under trying circumstances of long marches in very severe weather, and they were well pleased with our substantial final appreciation of their services.

We left Yarkand on the 28th May, and travelled to Aktagh by a different route from that we took on the outward journey, which is only practicable for caravans in winter, when the streams which it passes are low and frozen. On this occasion we encountered great difficulties from the melting snow torrents which made the main streams impassable every day for a certain length of time. By the end of a summer day, the sun's heat has penetrated into the glacier or snowbed, and drawn out a stream, which continues running till in a similar manner the night's freezing cold reaches into the same depth, and seals up the flowing springs. The duration and extent of the floods and torrents thus produced are affected, of course, by the state of the day, whether cloudy or bright, and the time of the summer season as regards its degree of heat. Travelling up the streams as we did towards their sources, we met the floods earlier each evening, and were able accordingly to commence the journey sooner each morning. The twisting and turning of the rivers in the narrow valleys and ravines, through which the route winds, necessitated innumerable crossings, which, in the swollen and rushing state of the waters, became each one more difficult than the last, from the alarm of the horses and the mules, and their reluctance to face the tumbling furious torrent: every crossing was a scene of wild uproar and struggle, and many a load was thrown or dragged under water. We found mules easier to manage on these occasions than horses. The latter, when at the head of a string of baggage animals, would stampede back in wild alarm, throwing all into confusion; while the mules, though

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IN THE YARKAND BAZAR—CHINESE TYPES.

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in fear, could more easily be induced to face the flood. Eventually, we had each string of horses led by a mule, thus reversing the caravan rule which prevails of batches of mules being always led by a horse, with coloured trappings and a loud-sounding bell. In ordinary circumstances mules will not follow one of their own kind.

A heavy fall of snow on the night of the 8th of June enabled us to cross the Yangi-Diwan pass (16,000 ft.) and traverse the deep rocky gorge from it down to the Yarkand river with comparative ease. The gorge was filled with masses of ice broken up by the action of the summer floods, but the greater cold and the gloom, following upon the previous night's snowfall, kept the stream down, and we worked our way over the ice blocks and fissures without the trouble of tumbling torrents as usual. We were fortunate in this respect with falls of snow on the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 15th June, as we pursued our journey over the Karakoram towards Leh. The return of cold weather checked the rise of the streams long enough to allow us to pass safely, and we met with no such great difficulties from floods in that part of the journey as were experienced by Mr Forsyth and his party who had passed earlier. Three days after crossing the high Karakoram pass (18,550 ft.), and while on the elevated Dipsang plateau, at about 17,000 feet we suffered a very sad loss in the death of our talented companion, Dr Stoliczka; he succumbed to the hardships of the journey, and died on 19th June, to the great regret of his many friends, and those interested in the scientific exploration of Central Asia.

Again, as on the outward journey, we found an ample supply of food and forage stored by order of the Maharajah of Kashmir for our party at various places on the high-lying mountain desert between the Kashgar frontier and Leh. These depôts were guarded by

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Tibetans in the military service of the Maharajah—quiet, patient men, inured to great privations, and displaying extraordinary powers of endurance, of whom I noted in a report made at the time, that if they were found to possess the quality of personal courage they would be invaluable as soldiers in those bitterly cold regions.[1]

There is a general knowledge of the distressing effects of rarefied atmosphere at great altitudes on man and beast, not born at high elevation. We crossed, on the journey over to Yarkand, five passes, ranging from 16,550 to 18,550 feet above the sea; and between these great elevated plateaux, one, the Dipsang, being 17,500 feet. The distress from rarefaction which had troubled us on the Khardung, the first pass (17,229 ft.), lasted but a short time, as the descent led down to comparatively low ground, but that from the next pass, the Susser (17,800 ft.), landed us on the high, undulating bleak plateau which extends for about 100 miles from that pass on the south to the Suget on the north, and our party suffered continuously more or less during the seven days occupied in crossing it. We experienced none of the symptoms of great height, viz., headache and difficulty of breathing, on the Pamirs, in the exaggerated degree that native travellers had described. None of our camp followers or people suffered in any unusual way, beyond becoming breathless when exertion was made. All were free from severe headache, except our Mess butler, who was quite like a mountain barometer in indicating a height of 12,000 feet, as he invariably then became a victim. But, generally speaking, one becomes more or less accustomed to rarefied air and suffers less, just as the effects of motion at sea wear off after a time. We found, on our return journey over the Karakoram great heights, that we were less

[1] The military qualities displayed by the Tibetans in the resistance made to the late Lhasa expedition (1904) support this opinion recorded in 1874. T.E.G.

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BAGGAGE YAKS CROSSING THE KHARDUNG PASS (17,229 FT.), W. TIBET, 30TH SEPTEMBER 1873.
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affected by the elevation than on the previous occasion.

Nature has adapted the human beings as well as the animals of those elevated regions to the conditions of a rarefied atmosphere. The great demand for transport on the Karakoram route, when our Mission was preparing to pass that way, took up all the limited supply of horse and mule carriage generally available for the Indian merchants trading with Yarkand, and accordingly they had recourse to Tibetan porters, who undertook to carry goods in convenient packages of eighty pounds weight, at the rate of one rupee (about two shillings) per stage. We saw an energetic Hindu trader arrive at the foot of the high Karakoram with eighty porters, each carrying such a load. The fact that these men, so laden, made an average daily journey of 14 miles for eleven days, over the high desert region of Tibet, under peculiarly distressing conditions of climate, proves the great endurance of the Tibetan peasant. Hardy and patient, with no extra clothing beyond what they wore and carried with their loads, they throve upon barley-meal and brick tea, and huddling together at night, slept in the open air with the temperature often far below zero.

I was glad to descend into the Vale of Kashmir from the wintry desolation of the Karakoram country, and the charm of the change made me sufficiently sentimental to remember what Moore's "Nurmahal" (Light of the Harem) sung of the "happy valley":—

> "'Gar behisht ast ru-i-zameen
> Hameen ast, hameen ast, hameen."
>
> ("If on earth there be a place of bliss,
> It is this, it is this, it is this.")

Here I enjoyed a rest which I greatly required, and our sorely tried horses and mules were literally in clover as they grazed peacefully in the green glades and golden

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meadows of Sonamerg. Thence I went to Rawal Pindi, arriving there in the end of July. When I left this place in the same month the previous year the thermometer had marked 100° in our tents, and before the middle of October the difference of temperature in the same tents was 115°, the thermometer marking 15° Fahr. below zero. I now returned to the same intense heat from the great cold of the Karakoram range; but I did not remain in it long, as I was allowed to go to cool Simla for a fortnight, to finish my official reports of journeys and doings. On the completion of this duty, I was favoured with an invitation from the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, to visit him in Calcutta, where he had remained throughout the hot season for the purpose of example, to be near the scene of the great famine of that year (1874) in Bengal.

The total cost of the Kashgar Mission was great, but Lord Northbrook was good enough to say that the knowledge gained from our exploration work was worth the whole amount. I had the honour of being gazetted Companion of the Star of India, and receiving, with my companions, the thanks of Her Majesty's Government and of the Government of India, and further of being appointed a representative Honorary A.D.C. to the Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

The famous Sir Jung Bahadur, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., the *de facto* ruler of Nepal, visited Calcutta at this time, and Lord Northbrook introduced me to him as lately returned from Tibet and Turkistan. He was eager for information regarding the new ruler of Kashgar who had established his power on the defeat of the Chinese, the position of the Russians in that direction, and the Kashmiri government in Western Tibet. I took advantage of a complimentary remark made by him on the practical utility of our characteristic restlessness and love of travel and adventure, to mention my great desire to undertake another journey to those

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elevated regions in the hope of reaching Lhasa, and said that through his favour I might be allowed to accompany one of the annual Nepalese caravans to that place. He seemed to become nervous regarding further talk on this subject, and said that Nepal was powerless to help or protect at Lhasa, where their envoy had once been grievously maltreated by having his nose cut off, and seeing my horror at the idea, he grimly added, "I don't think you would like that."

In recognition of the aid and protection afforded to my party by the Mir of Wakhan, the Viceroy of India decided to send him and his son some valuable presents, and informed the Amir of Kabul of his intention to do so, at the same time thanking him for the kind reception given to us by his vassal. Sher Ali was then in one of his fits of bad humour with the British Government, and sent a somewhat discourteous reply, saying that he, as ruler of Afghanistan, knew how to reward his vassals, and reserved to himself the right to do so. At that time, October 1874, there was waiting on the frontier a consignment of treasure with arms and ammunition from the Indian Government, which the Amir was arranging to take over. On receipt of his reply to the Viceroy's letter, instructions were given to delay that business, and a further letter was sent repeating the request contained in the previous one, and saying that, in anticipation of consent, Sirdar Ibrahim Khan, who was known to His Highness, would proceed at once to Kabul bearing a complimentary letter to himself (the Amir) and a letter and presents for Mir Fateh Ali Shah of Wakhan. Sher Ali reconsidered the matter and allowed Ibrahim Khan to proceed. I afterwards received letters from the Mir and his son expressing great pleasure at receiving the presents and letters, and being remembered by their English friends.

I here reproduce, with permission, an article from

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the Indian *Pioneer* of August 1874, giving the public opinion concerning the results of the Kashgar Mission :—

"The two parties which composed the Yarkand Mission have both finished their long and trying march. Mr Forsyth reached Srinuggur on 5th July; and his party, consisting of Dr Bellew and Captain Chapman, arrived at the some place two days afterwards. Colonel Gordon, whose party was originally made up of Captain Biddulph, Captain Trotter, and Dr Stoliczka, marched into Sonamurg, at the head of the Scinde Valley, Kashmere, on 12th July, accompanied only by Captain Biddulph, Dr Stoliczka having, as our readers know too well, died at the Sasser Pass, and Captain Trotter having gone direct to Simla. We have no record of any march so trying in all its details, and the greatest praise is due to those who, with equal cheerfulness, met the extremes of heat and cold, and with diplomatic skill, energy, and zeal, carried to a successful accomplishment the difficult task with which they were entrusted. But the greatest feat throughout the whole expedition seems to be that which was performed by Colonel Gordon and his party. When Mr Forsyth was preparing to return, at the close of the sojourn in Yarkand, arrangements were made with the authorities for a journey to the Great Pamir Steppe. This journey was undertaken by Colonel Gordon, Captain Biddulph, Captain Trotter, and Dr Stoliczka only; and some idea of the difficulty of the journey may be formed when it is said that this party had to march, for twenty days in deep snow, distances of 20 and 25 miles a day. But the journey was successfully performed; and the Government of India has expressed its thanks to these officers individually for what they have done. There is no doubt but that the gain to Government by this journey will be very great, for accurate knowledge concerning a very important part of Central Asia has been obtained. The information now gained will set at rest those doubts which could not be satisfactorily solved at the time of the negotiations with Russia two years ago, as to the geographical position of Wakhan and its political relations. With the exception of

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Captain Wood, whose journey (in 1837) reached no further than the lake on the Great Pamir, no Europeans have seen this interesting part of the country; and the passage of the whole Steppe from East to West by one route, and back again from West to East by another, may be looked upon, not only as a considerable feat, but as opening up an entirely new part of the Continent, and adding considerably to geographical knowledge. Maps of a great portion of the Steppe have been drawn out, and Colonel Gordon has made a complete and valuable collection of water-colour drawings of its principal features. There is thus every reason to expect that in a short time the geography of Wakhan and the countries close to the Russian Frontier will be almost as well known as that of our Indian North-East Frontier. On this point we have every reason to be proud of the Yarkand Mission. It was well planned and carried out. The Treaty is satisfactory; our relations with the Atalik and his subjects are friendly; our acquaintance with the geography of Central Asia has been extended and improved; and—what is perhaps best of all—the Government of India have the assurance that they have officers in their army who can 'do and almost over-do the deeds of' those whose names are brightest in Indian history."

The following is an extract from a further article in a later number of the same paper regarding the Yarkand-Kashgar Mission.

"As a *tour de force*, the expedition was a triumph. It showed what courage, physical endurance, and foresight could accomplish against supreme obstacles; helped us to gauge accurately the difficulties that would confront an invader; and recruited our slender knowledge of an almost unknown world. Beside this —a feature in the affair which has never been sufficiently noticed—it gave us British officers to follow in the path of Marco Polo, and divest the passage of the Pamir steppes of some of the terrors with which tradition and ignorance had surrounded it."

I now make a few remarks on some of the results of our visit to the Pamirs and Wakhan. We ascertained

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one fact which seriously affected the political boundary engagement made between Great Britain and Russia the previous year. (January 1873). We found that in taking the Oxus as a boundary, and speaking of its sources as a political point of demarcation, the subject had been dealt with in some degree of ignorance. Wakhan was treated as a province lying south-east, and on the left bank of the Oxus, and other small states lower down the river were similarly regarded, whereas they owned territory on both banks. And further, our discoveries raised the moot question of the true source of the Oxus, into which, however, I do not propose to enter here. We also saw that the first probable point of contact between the British and Russian frontiers would be on the Pamir highlands, but the conclusion of the International Boundary Commission of 1896, by which the Little Pamir was decided to belong to Badakhshan, in subjection to Afghanistan, has secured for a time that narrow belt of territory to act as a buffer between them.

We discovered that the Pamirs were not the "Roof of the World" in the sense, as had been supposed, of being a watershed east and west. The waters of all, with the exception of the eastern stream from the Taghdungbash Pamir, collect in the Oxus and flow to the west; the true watershed being further east, marked by the Neza Tash range, and the Kizil Art plain which extends north towards the Alai plateau. We settled the question as to the water of the Great Pamir lake being salt or fresh. We found it to be perfectly sweet, and confirmed the accuracy of Colonel Sir Henry Yule's opinion that it was "difficult to conceive that a lake with so copious an effluent as it (Wood's lake) should have salt waters." The lake is known to the Wakhis and Kirghiz by several names, but hearing of no distinctive one we decided that the

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ON THE SARHADD STREAM, WAKHAN—HEAD WATERS OF THE OXUS.

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name "Victoria," given to it by Wood, might well be introduced into our maps without any risk of causing that geographical confusion, the fear of which made him hesitate to apply it. Our observations made on the spot exploded several theories: among them, the idea that the people of Sirikol were a remnant of the Uigurs, the original inhabitants of Eastern Turkistan. We found them to be of Persian stock, similar to the alien peoples of the small states in and about the Oxus basin, all professing the Shiah form of Mahomedanism, and belonging to the sect of Ismailis (known in India as Khojas), who acknowledge the Agha Khan of Bombay as their spiritual head, and to whom their annual offerings of tithes ("Peter's pence") are regularly sent, even from this remote part of Asia. (I shall refer later to the Agha Khan and this sect, when I tell of my wanderings in Persia.) They all speak one common language, Persian, though having among themselves local dialects, similarly as dialects prevail in other countries.

It had been said from time to time that Mir Wali could show that all the guilt of the murder of Mr Hayward should not be charged to him, and that he was ready to produce the proofs to any British agent whom he might meet in his exile. There was some communication in this sense between him and Sirdar Ibrahim Khan, who preceded my party, and he was understood to be ready to await my coming to Kila Panja; but, as I have previously mentioned, his readiness disappeared at my approach, and he left before my arrival. Rumours had been spread in India that the accounts originally received from Gilgit were not to be trusted, and that the Kashmir authorities were in some way connected with the deed. The Royal Geographical Society, under whose auspices Hayward was travelling, made every effort to arrive at the truth, and the President, Sir Roderick Murchison, speaking

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on 21st February 1871, said that up to that time he had not seen any evidence of a nature likely to incriminate the Kashmir authorities. But the suspicion lay upon them, and in consequence Lord Mayo's proposed visit to Kashmir in 1871 was abandoned. The further information on the subject, which we obtained in Wakhan, showed to Lord Northbrook how necessary it was to bring the matter to an issue, and this was done carefully and judicially in the end of 1874. The decision that there was no evidence to support the suspicion against the Kashmir authorities was approved by the Viceroy, who invited the Maharajah to Simla in the spring of 1875, and personally expressed this to him in a pleasing and complimentary manner. That meeting marked the beginning of the existing successful strong policy on the Kashmir frontier, which has secured for us complete control of the mountain gates leading to India from the Pamirs, Wakhan, and Badakhshan.

No time was lost in applying to the purposes of the defence of India the practical results of the topographical information we brought back from the countries beyond the Kashmir frontier. The first step taken by the Government was to reconsider their decision which had previously been arrived at, to make the prolongation of the railway from Lahore to Peshawar a narrow gauge line. This line was then under construction, but the work was stopped until the new question, raised under altered conditions of knowledge and policy, was fully discussed. It was argued that a break of gauge at Lahore would probably prove to be a great military mistake and political blunder, and eventually the standard broad gauge for a through line from the sea base to the frontier was wisely adopted.

At the time of the despatch of the British Mission to the Court of the Atalik Ghazi of Kashgar (1873), there was a steady growth of Russian dominion and

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influence over the wide region north of the Oxus and the Tian Shan range, extending from Tashkend and Kokand towards China. It was therefore not unreasonable that Russia should regard our Mission as an invasion of her sphere of influence; and to China, then aiming at a reconquest of her revolted provinces, our appearance there to establish friendly relations with the ruler, who was regarded as a rebel, must have been considered antagonistic to her interests. (We were, however, only following Russia's example of the previous year.) Immediately following upon this came the proclamation of a Turkish protectorate over Kashgar, and then a strong community of interests was created between Russia and China. Both Powers were opposed to the continuance of the Mahomedan state of Kashgar, and the result was its extinction.

Three years after the departure of our Embassy, the independent state of Kashgar ceased to exist, and the Chinese, who had been expelled from Eastern Turkistan in 1864, after ruling there for a hundred years, returned to power and possession in 1877, on the sudden death of the Amir. The rise and fall of that Central Asian monarchy is such an interesting subject, that I think I may well finish the short story of our Kashgar Mission doings with a rapid sketch of the life and death of the Atalik Ghazi, who was a striking example of a self-made king.

In 1862, when the ferment of Islamite rebellion spread from the Central States of China to the provinces on her western frontier, and plunged the whole of Eastern or Chinese Turkistan into bloodshed and anarchy, a favourable opportunity was presented to the partisans of the saintly Khoja claimants to the throne of Kashgar to re-establish a Mahomedan sovereignty. The movement in this direction attracted many adventurous spirits, and among them was Mahomed Yakub Beg (or Khan), but being of Tajik extraction, any greatness on his part was

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not likely to be readily endorsed by the haughty Osbegs, among whom the name of Tajik is as much a term of reproach as it is significant of a distinction of race; and it had been hitherto unknown in Asia for a Tajik to rule over Osbegs.

Mahomed Yakub's father was the tax-gatherer of Piskat, a small place in Kokand: his mother obtained a divorce from the father, and married a butcher, in whose house Mahomed Yakub grew up. This is the reason why he was sometimes in derision called the "butcher's son." In his early days fortune befriended him through the Mayor of Tashkend, who married his younger sister, and enabled him to enter the Kokandi army. Having been given opportunities of distinguishing himself, he became known as an energetic and capable officer, and he seized an early chance of widening his sphere of action. Emissaries came to Tashkend from Kashgar with the request that a Khoja prince of the old ruling family, which had been exiled by the Chinese, might be sent to rule the country. Alim Kul, the chief commander of the army, who was then practically ruler of Kokand, agreed to the request, and named Buzurg Khan, Khoja, who appointed Mahomed Yakub to be his Vazir and General.

Buzurg Khan entered Kashgar in July 1864, and was received with enthusiasm, and welcomed as a deliverer from the lawless Kirghiz who had flocked to the town for plunder, on the expulsion of the Chinese. His first act was to appoint Mahomed Yakub to restore order in the city, and to organise an army from amongst the Kokandi and Afghan residents. It is unnecessary here to follow further the early career in Kashgar of this remarkable man, Mahomed Yakub, nor that of his master, the Khoja Buzurg Khan. Suffice it to say that the latter, true to the character of his priestly fraternity, on the realisation of so readily conceded a throne, made over the conduct of affairs to his general, and straight-

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way launched out into a course of unrestrained debauchery and licentiousness; whilst the former, the leading spirit in the army, took advantage of the opportunity to seize the Government for himself, and gradually to extend his authority over the whole country as the champion of Islam, under the religious title of "Atalik Ghazi." He was favoured in his designs by the circumstances of the time, viz., the weakness of the Peking Government on the one hand, and the preoccupation of the Russians on the other.

Affairs in Kashgar had been watched with increasing curiosity by the Russian authorities in Asia. It was with no little surprise that they saw order quickly emerging from the anarchy that had so lately filled the country. It could scarcely be pleasing to them to see a strong Mahomedan Government growing up in place of the weak but peaceable Chinese rule, more especially as the favourable treaties concluded with the Court of Peking had been rendered void by the course of events. Unwilling, however, as they were to recognise the new Government that had sprung up, the time came when it was necessary to acknowledge the Atalik as an independent prince who could no longer be ignored, and accordingly a Russian Embassy, headed by Colonel Baron von Kaulbars, arrived at Kashgar in September 1872, for the purpose of making a commercial treaty. The Embassy was courteously received, and after a brief stay took its departure, Baron von Kaulbars congratulating the Atalik on being the first Asiatic prince who had concluded a treaty with Russia without the compulsion of previous defeat in the field. This treaty naturally gave the Atalik great satisfaction, as by it he was acknowledged as an independent sovereign, and no longer a rebel against the Chinese, and therefore beyond the sphere of international law.

Immediately after the conclusion of this treaty

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with Russia, the Atalik despatched his sister's son, Syud Yakub Khan, Tora, as envoy to the Viceroy of India and the Sultan of Turkey. He returned in the end of the following year (1873) with a British Mission, headed by Mr Forsyth, in compliance with the Atalik's desire to make a commercial treaty with the British Government. The results of the Kashgar Envoy's mission to Constantinople were, as it appeared to the Atalik, of very great importance. The Sultan accepted the Atalik's submission to himself, as the Khalif to whom is due the allegiance of all devout Mahomedans, and Kashgar was formally placed under Turkish protection.

The weak point in the Atalik's policy was his lust of territory, which led him to extend his conquests too far to the eastward. Not content with Aksu and Turfan, he pushed on to Urumchi and Manas, across one of the spurs of the Tian Shan, thus coming into contact with his old enemies the Chinese, and placing himself in a somewhat difficult position towards the Russians at Kulja. The Peking Government for a long time showed no serious sign of attempt to recover its rebellious province of Kashgaria, but nevertheless it showed no disposition to relinquish its claim. The fiction of having Governors at Kashgar, Yarkand, Khoten, etc., was steadily observed in the Gazette. Just as the ineffectual mission sent to England and Turkey in 1872, by the leader of the Yunnan Mahomedan rebels, roused the Peking Government to make the strong effort of vindication of its authority, which succeeded in finally crushing that rebellion, so it would appear that the Atalik's mission sent to Constantinople, and the declaration of the Turkish protectorate of Kashgar in 1874, brought about the determined advance made by the Chinese in 1876-77, which caused the death of the Atalik, and the recovery of their lost sovereignty.

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KALMAK ARCHERS OF THE ATALIK'S CHINESE GUARD
(Bows, 5 feet long; Arrows, 40 inches.)

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The struggle commenced in 1875-76 by a Chinese army capturing Urumchi and Manas, the Atalik's posts on the northern side of the Tian Shan mountain range. On hearing of this the Atalik hurried from Kashgar to his distant eastern frontier to defend the important position of Turfan. The winter (which is very severe in those regions) of 1876-77 put an end to military operations before the opposing forces could measure their strength, and as both sides felt the great want of provisions, they were obliged to withdraw their more advanced lines of posts.

It was thought that the Chinese could only depend for their supplies on a very distant base, and that, as before, they would of necessity have to halt until the corn for their wants was sown and grown behind the Great Wall. But they found themselves in a favourable position to obtain provisions from Kulja and the fertile province of Ili, then occupied by Russia. The Atalik complained of this as a breach of neutrality, and urged the fact of friendly treaty relations existing between himself and Russia. The answer is said to have been that as Ili was a province of China, merely temporarily occupied by Russia, there was no reason why trade with her should be prohibited. In 1868, when the Tungani insurrection threatened to disturb the adjoining Russian possessions, Russia, by arrangement with China, took over Kulja and the Ili Valley as a precautionary measure, and restored them to her in 1881. It is reasonable to believe that the rapid successes of the Chinese in their Kashgar campaign of 1877 were largely due, not only to the timely assistance in much-needed food supplies obtained from Ili, but also to the prestige which accompanied this assistance from what had come to be regarded as Russian territory.

In the opening of spring, in 1877, both sides prepared to renew the campaign. The Atalik con-

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centrated his troops on the Tian Shan, and there awaited the Chinese attack on Turfan, which ended in their capture of that place. Whilst both sides were preparing for further fighting, an event happened which placed the whole of Kashgaria at the mercy of the Chinese. This was the sudden death of the Atalik, which occurred on the 29th of May. He was said to have been murdered by one of his own officers—an old brother-in-arms. His death became the signal for general disturbance and revolution, which prepared the way for the advance of the Chinese to the capital, and their easy reconquest of the whole country.

Mahomed Yakub Khan, Atalik Ghazi, Amir of Kashgar, was certainly one of the most remarkable Asiatics of the last century. Born of undistinguished parents, and of a despised race, he moulded passing events to his will, and made himself master of a kingdom of considerable extent, displaying daring, energy, firmness and sagacity in the highest degree. This soldier of fortune, in ten years, raised himself from a humble position to that of an independent sovereign, who was considered worthy to receive embassies bearing autograph letters from the Queen of England and the Czar of Russia.

The following is an extract from the quaintly-expressed official announcement of the close of the successful campaign in Kashgaria, and the complete vindication of the Imperial authority in that distant province, which was published in the Peking Gazette in 1878.

"Since the revolt of the Buruts (Black Kirghiz) in 1864, under the Mahomedan rebel Kiu-Siang-Yui and others, Kashgar and seven other towns in the South fell into their hands, and subsequently, Turfan and Urumchi. For more than ten years has the Court been reverently undergoing the chastisement of Heaven. Tso-Taung-T'ang was specially invested with the title

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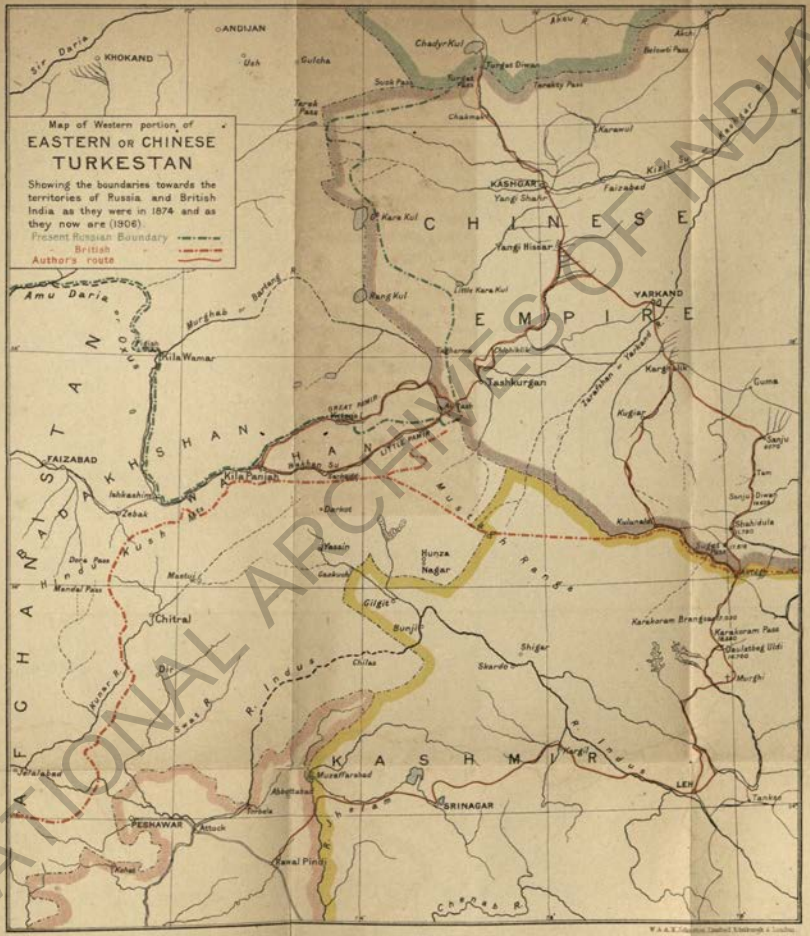

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of Imperial Commissioner, and called upon to take the management of military operations in the New Dominion, and this High Officer, intent at once upon the work of extermination and pacification, first devised and carried out measures for the subjugation of Zungaria. He commenced with the recapture of Urumchi, that he might hold command of a strong position: then Manas was recovered, and advancing by several routes simultaneously, he took in succession Turfan and other strongholds. The important places in Eastern Kashgaria being wrested from the insurgents, he marshalled his Army and advanced Westwards. By a series of rapid movements, accomplished as easily as the splitting of a bamboo, he secured possession of the eight towns of Southern Kashgaria, all of which are now in our hands. Prayerful reliance on a Mighty Providence, and trust in the fostering care of an illustrious ancestry, have enabled their Majesties, the Empresses, unceasing in their solicitude, and unwearying in their efforts, to discover a skilful and capable agent, actuated by the same treatment of the stranger and those of his own race: a leader who has executed his commands with a brilliant success that will afford solace to the spirit of the departed Emperor who reigns in Heaven, and has realised the hopes of officials and people. Our consolation and joy are indeed profound, and it becomes our duty to endow the leader of our Army, battered by wind and rain, and exposed to every hardship, with the highest mark of Imperial grace, as a reward for his exertions. We command" etc., etc.

Then followed a list of rewards and distinctions conferred on officers, occupying thirty pages of the Gazette.

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CHAPTER VI

(1874-1879)

On completing my special service under the Indian Foreign Office, I reverted to military duty in the Army Staff post of Assistant Adjutant-General of Division; but I had made up my mind to return to regimental work, and finding no opportunity of a command under the Commander-in-Chief, I applied for one of the corps under the Foreign Department, and was posted as Commandant of the Mewar Bhil regiment, serving at Kharwara, in Rajputana, and giving many opportunities of camp life. There again I had excellent sport with gun and rifle in the jungles of the Mewar Hill tracts, which were under my superintendence for the purpose of keeping order among the tribes. I found the Bhils of Mewar less backward in civilisation than those of Malwa, of whom I had previous experience in Central India, but still retaining many of the violent characteristics which cause them to be regarded as the Ishmaelites of those parts. The patronage of the military corps that are administered by the Foreign Department of the Government of India belongs to the Viceroy, and when Lord Northbrook personally told me of my nomination to the command of the Mewar Bhil regiment, he laughingly alluded to a Bengali Babu's description of the wild people from whom it is recruited, which he had seen in some amusing extracts from educational examination papers. The Babu, in answer to the question, "What do you

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know concerning the aboriginal Bhil inhabitants of Central India?" wrote: "The Bhil is a black man, and still more hairy; he shoots you with an arrow, and puts your body in a ditch; by this you may know your Bhil."

I took up my new command in October 1874, and found plenty to do in regimental affairs, which had been allowed to run a course of their own that was not conducive to good order and military discipline. The regiment was organised on the "irregular" system, with a complement of only four British officers, and the previous commandant, being easily influenced, had made matters so bad that the officers proceeded to quarrel seriously amongst themselves. A Court of Inquiry, composed of senior officers, had investigated all the circumstances, with the result that only the junior of the four officers was permitted to remain with the regiment. A new commandant, second-in-command, and adjutant were appointed, and thus it was that I went to command the Mewar Bhil regiment. The adjutant had arrived a short time before me; he was Lieutenant Arthur Conolly, nephew and namesake of the well-known Captain Arthur Conolly, who laid down his life nobly in his country's cause at Bokhara, in 1842. He was a most capable officer and a delightful companion. He possessed superior qualifications as an Oriental linguist, being proficient in Persian and Pushtu, as well as Hindustani, and moreover he was a dashing rider. He afterwards was associated with me in the Afghan war, when I found his services as Political Officer to be of high value.

I went home on leave of absence in 1875, and shortly after, in 1876, I published, and illustrated with my own sketches, "The Roof of the World."[1]

[1] The narrative of a journey over the high plateau of Tibet to the Russian frontier, and the Oxus sources on Pamir.

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The title was suggested to me by Colonel Sir Henry Yule, R.E., the well-known authority on Central Asian geography. I may add that the book was well received by the public.

I returned to my regiment in 1876, and was summoned as Honorary Aide-de-camp, to attend the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, at the great Delhi Durbar, held on 1st January 1877, for the proclamation of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, as Empress of India. I met many old friends at that gathering, and amongst them, the late Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart, then commanding the Lahore division of the army and expecting soon to leave India on the expiry of his tenure of command, little knowing what the goddess Fortune had in store for him. One of his great friends, Colonel Baigrie of the Bombay army, a well-known tiger-hunter, suggested to me that we should make up a party to show General Stewart some good tiger-shooting, for, with all the instincts of a sportsman, he had never had the chance of seeing the Indian jungle king in his forest home. I had the run of some promising tiger ground in Mewar, and was able, with the help of the good trackers and tried hunters in the Bhil corps, to organise a very successful party.

I think this shooting party deserves more than a passing notice, and I shall accordingly mention some of its scenes and incidents, not only on account of their interest, but also to break the monotony of my record of military and other official matters. The country we shot over is known as the Mewar Hill tracts, partly peopled by uncivilised and semi-savage Bhils, the original inhabitants of the land, who, on being dispossessed of the fertile parts by the Rajput invaders some centuries ago, took to the wooded hills and deep forests, and became thorough "bushmen," skilled trackers of the denizens of the jungle, and practised hunters of all that can fall to their arrows, for most

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of them are even yet in the bow and arrow stage. When the commandant of the Mewar corps is a sportsman, he has every inducement to wander in these haunts of wild men and wild beasts, for official reports, based on personal knowledge of the remote districts and their unreclaimed inhabitants, are expected from him. The sportsman commandant thus finds in his camp life there a happy combination of business and pleasure, interesting political work and good shooting. The love of wild sport shown by these untamed Bhils, their truthfulness, and a certain merriment of manner, appeal to the congenial English mind, and the commandant, being brought into contact with the local hunters, and inspiring confidence among the people, becomes, in his capacity as political officer, an arbitrator in their feuds and disputes whose decisions are generally readily accepted. For such an officer the best trackers and hunters are always eager to "seek and find" the big game of the jungle.

In and about the Kharwara jungles the dry season sets in early in the year, and by the end of March the scorching sun has killed the long grass, made the coverts leafless, and dried up most of the springs, streams, and ponds. Only in the damp localities, by the few springs that outlive the general swallowing up, and on the banks of the stream-beds that have pools here and there or a trickling flow, is the green cover, so necessary for the tiger, to be found. There he sleeps by day, and watches by night to seize the hog and deer that come to drink; and when he finds the game suspicious of danger and avoiding the drinking pool where he lies concealed, he makes a great disturbance by roaring fearfully, and then quickly steals away to a distant pool he knows of, which instinct tells him the alarmed animals will resort to, when fleeing from the other. When unsuccessful with game he turns his attention in the

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afternoon or early morning to the domestic cattle. During the hot dry months, contract herdsmen collect from village and hamlet great numbers of lean bullocks and gaunt buffaloes to take to the distant low-lying river-banks for grazing and water, when the home grounds, tanks, and wells can no longer afford one or the other. There the bullocks roam in the bush jungles which remain green, and the buffaloes wallow in the swamps and marshes. Herds of female camels with their young are also seen browsing in these jungle tracts, which thus in the extreme heat of summer become the haunt of both domestic and wild animals—tame, timid, and fierce. The tiger vastly prefers the plump pig and the tender deer to the tough ox and the rank flavoured camel, and it is only when he cannot get the former that he takes the latter. But only when driven by desperate hunger will he dare to attack the big buffalo: the buffalo calf he takes freely when the chance of a stray one is offered, but he fears the formidable full-grown animal, and seldom molests it when in company with others. There seems to be a good understanding of mutual non-interference between them when they happen to come together, and I shall tell later on of a tigress we found in the same piece of marshy ground with a herd of buffaloes who, though well aware of her presence, showed no alarm or concern.

There were many good trackers and tried hunters in the ranks of the Bhil corps, and one of the native officers, by name "Homa," undertook to lead them out with my shooting party, and show that he himself, notwithstanding his rise in life from sepoy to the commissioned grade, had not lost any of his old cunning in woodcraft and tiger tactics. Success in life, such as Homa had secured, generally tends to make a native lazy and stout, but when I saw Homa ten years later, he had still the spare figure, the alert

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step, and the quick eye of the hunter. He took as his second-in-command Hubla, a serjeant in the Mewar corps who was a noted hunter, and also a Bhil bugler to communicate with the long line of beaters, for some of the trackers who were distributed among them being trained soldiers knew the bugle calls, and were thus able to pass Homa's orders.

The Kharwara party met at my house there on the 22nd of April 1877. It consisted of[1] General Donald Stewart, Colonel Baigrie, Colonel James Hills, Major Furse, Major Jopp, and myself. Dr Simmonds joined us for a few days. The party broke up on the 18th of May, and between those dates we bagged ten tigers and six panthers, without injury or accident to any one engaged in the sport. But on one occasion my heart almost ceased to beat from the terrible suspense I was in while I watched a beater, unconscious of danger and beyond help, walking as it seemed to me into the jaws of death. The trackers had marked down three tigers, the shooting points on rocks and trees had been selected, and the guns were all in position, when something appeared to happen far forward in the "beat" which caused a long check. As captain of the "shoot" I was anxious to do the best on such a promising occasion, and accordingly I left my post on the extreme right, and passed along the rear of the "guns," communicating with each as I went, and telling them that I was going forward by the left flank to join the beating line. After passing the left gun, and getting forward in low jungle at the foot of the ridge along which the beaters were advancing, one of two Bhils with me whispered,

[1] The late Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.; the late Colonel Baigrie, C.B., Deputy Quarter-Master-General, Bombay army; Lieutenant-General Sir James Hills Johnes, V.C., G.C.B.; Colonel G. A. Furse, C.B., late 42nd Royal Highlanders; Colonel John Jopp, C.B., Bombay army.

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"Look to the right, on the face of the hill: three tigers!" We stopped to watch, and then saw a fourth great tiger moving forward slowly and sulkily after the three, and on reaching a shady spot under a rock, lie down. The beaters were then coming on quickly, rather ahead of the elephants, which could only proceed slowly through the thick bush cover, and to my horror I saw several of them suddenly appear, with one of the village tom-tom performers, coming on carelessly, believing that the three tigers which they had seen were all that had been driven out, and that these were well on towards the guns. I could do nothing but look anxiously from my distant position, and I watched rather breathlessly for the meeting about to take place with the sulky big tiger under the rock. Fortunately, the beast was seen by a beater a little higher up the ridge than the others, and he promptly shouted to them; but the careless drummer with his silent tom-tom, not perceiving the direction of the alarm, walked straight on, and found himself face to face with the tiger, which had risen on hearing the shout. The drummer, whom we afterwards ascertained to be the village barber, boldly stood his ground, beat his tom-tom furiously, yelled frantically, even making a rush forward when he saw the tiger turning to go, and as it went away slowly and sulkily he yelled his shrillest and beat his loudest in wild triumph. No shot had yet been fired at the tiger, otherwise the rage of fear and fight would probably have produced a different ending to that meeting.

When the elephants came up, I mounted one of them, and took the beater line on towards the guns which, in the meantime, had opened a hot fire. Stewart, Simmonds, Hills, and Furse were in the thick of the fight, but the great luck was Stewart's, for he killed one tiger dead, and sent two, wounded,

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down the line. One of these died hard between Hills and Simmonds; the other Baigrie and I followed, and killed from the elephants. The fourth tiger managed to get away untouched, but the trackers took up the trail, and we bagged it the next day. The tom-tom beater, whose plucky behaviour I had witnessed, was not forgotten: he was sent for, complimented, and well rewarded, much to his surprise and satisfaction, for this bold barber was a most modest man, and he was not aware of having done anything remarkable. The joke was made that he had the closest shave of being killed, but it wasn't good enough for him or those about him to see: the reward rupees filled his eye and mind too much, and he was seriously happy. Had he hesitated and turned on meeting the tiger, it would have been on him in an instant; and we could therefore well afford to be liberal to him, as, irrespective of other considerations, his courage had saved us a gratuity for his family.

In the jungle game of sport, "Stripes," the tiger, ranks high above "Spots," the panther, and as the two are sometimes found in the same beat, we had the usual rule that, when the former was known to be there or thereabouts, the latter was to pass unchallenged, so that the royal animal should not be driven off his way to the guns by the sound of a shot. But at other times we used to go after panthers of which the trackers had intelligence, and the following incident of good sport with one is, I think, worth relating. A fine male had been marked down in a deep shady dell, and the guns were so well placed that we made certain of bagging it. But by stealthy creeping it managed to get away without giving any of us the chance of a shot, and succeeded in reaching some low rocky hills about a mile distant. In his rocky home there is no more dangerous beast than the vicious, agile panther or leopard. Baigrie and I went forward to turn it out,

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remaining together in case of the beast attacking. The trackers pointed out a cave as the probable hiding-place as far as they could judge, and they proved to be right. The cave was formed by a tumbled mass of broken rock on the side of a narrow, steep ravine. We climbed on the blocks above the opening, accompanied by two Bhil hunters with the spare guns, and the sporting bugler who always went with the beating line and was as keen as any hunter of the party. On this occasion he carried a long stick with which he poked about in the crevices of the rocks, peering closely all round for the hidden panther. Suddenly he touched me on the shoulder, silently pointing right underneath, where, through a narrow opening, the panther's spotted skin could be seen a few feet below. The trackers were warned by signs, and when all were safely placed, the bugler pushed his stick down and poked the panther, which sprang out blazing with rage, and fell at once to our shots. To the onlookers, as well as to us, it was a most exciting finish.

We drove for another panther the next day, but without success. Nothing came of the beat beyond the interest which attaches to the outcome of an Indian jungle when thus disturbed and driven. There is always something curious to see and observe: the dainty deer stealing out softly, the wild pig trotting along stolidly, stopping sometimes to listen to the distant noise of beater and elephant behind, then going on cautiously, and looking about carefully at the edge of the open before making a rush for some distant covert; the skulking hyena and jackal, sneaking away to dark hole and corner to escape from bright daylight; the smaller birds flying, the bigger ones running, and among the latter the gay peacock, with outstretched, flexible neck held low, and moving with a quick, undulating motion, preparatory to discordant cry and flight. Then comes a flock of the big bounding

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"langoor," common in the Mewar jungles, magnificent specimens of the monkey tribe, tall and lithe, with sinewy limbs and long, strong prehensile tail as useful as a hand, black face with white hair surrounding, and grey fur coat. When disturbed, they make their loud, hollow-sounding, "boom-boom" cry heard at a great distance.

A huge langoor gave me and himself a great fright once by jumping up beside me on a tree, unaware of my presence. I was perched perfectly motionless about 10 feet from the ground, on the look-out for a panther, which was being driven by the elephants from some bush cover. I was seated on a thick bough, with my left arm passed loosely through a stirrup leather buckled round an adjacent upright branch to steady me, when a gang of langoors came booming and bounding out of the jungle on the other side of the open space I was watching. Like clever skirmishers they came rapidly across the clear ground to reach quickly the covert, on the edge of which I was posted well hidden. A great big fellow, whom I would not have liked to tackle unarmed even on firm ground, jumped up my tree in wild exuberance of spirits, and sat on the same branch as myself, almost touching me, turning quickly to look in the direction from which he had run. My clothes were of grey brown tint, well calculated to resemble the jungle surroundings, so the langoor did not at once discover that he was seated along side of "dreaded man." I shrank from the close proximity of the ugly-mouthed, sharp-fanged, sinewy, powerful brute who, happily for me, was of a mild disposition, and in the nature of things ignorant of his great superiority on his native tree. I was also so close to it that I could not have used my rifle. The situation was thus for but two or three seconds, I would say, when the langoor became suddenly conscious of being within touch of a man. The change from chattering confidence to paralysing terror was instantaneous and

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ludicrous. He utterly collapsed and dropped to the ground as if dead, recovering in a dazed manner and running away with short, quick steps like a rabbit, not a bound in his body, or a curl in his tail, which now dragged behind like a bit of rope, instead of being arched proudly over the back with an inward double turn at the end. With me the change from fear to fun was equally instantaneous, and I was most gratefully amused at the absurd appearance of the limp langoor as he ran away in terrible fright.

I have alluded to the good understanding of mutual non-interference between tigers and buffaloes, and the following which occurred during our shooting party of 1877 is an instance of it. We knew of a tiger being in a long bit of bush and reed jungle ending in a marsh close to the "Mahi" stream. A path ran across the ground at the head of the marsh, and it was decided to post the guns on it for the drive so far, from the upper end of the jungle, then, if unsuccessful in finding, to beat from that to the river-bank, through the marsh. There were some small islands or bits of firm ground in the marsh, covered with the thick close-leaved "corinda" bush, a favourite refuge for tigers, owing to its branches curving down to the ground at some distance from the stem, and forming an umbrella-like shade, keeping the damp ground upon which it grows more than usually cool. The marsh was occupied by a large herd of buffaloes, but the hunters said this did not necessarily show that the tiger was not there. The first drive from the upper end of the jungle to the path proved unsuccessful, and the guns having moved forward to the stream-bank, arrangements were made for the elephants to beat the deeper part of the marsh, the Bhils accompanying and yelling on the flanks. The appearance of the elephants sent the great clumsy buffaloes plunging about grotesquely and snorting loudly in alarm, which aroused the tiger, and it was seen to

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steal quietly from patch to patch of covert until it reached the gun line on the river-side, where it was killed.

In this Kharwara sporting trip I nearly lost a valuable female hunting elephant lent to me by the Maharana of Udaipur, from suffocation in a morass. Baigrie and I, mounted on our steady retriever elephants, went into the morass in search of two wounded tigers, and immediately on entering, my elephant, when putting aside the tall thick reeds with her trunk in obedience to the mahout's directions, so as to allow free passage for the howdah, came suddenly on a tiger within a few feet, crouched as if about to spring—most lifelike, but in reality quite dead. The elephant was evidently suffering from an attack of the nerves that day, for notwithstanding her well-earned reputation as a staunch animal in presence of danger, she gave a shrill cry of terror, and swung violently round to run away, but was brought up sharp by a severe blow from the heavy driving hook-prod carried by the mahout; and being thus reminded of the stronger wills on her back and neck, she faced the tiger, and went up to it cautiously with outstretched trunk. It looked as if the tiger, sorely wounded, had drawn itself together in readiness for a furious leap, on hearing us approach the swamp, and died in that position, the body sinking a little in the spongy ground, and so preserving the expectant attitude, with the head down.

The elephant had hardly recovered from this shake to her nerves when she was exposed to another alarming form of unexpected danger, which for a time made her wildly distracted with fear. Having found one of the tigers, we passed down an oozy stream-bed, with high reed cover in it, leading from the swamp, in search of the other which was said to be there. As the course of the stream narrowed, Baigrie left it to beat along the side, while I continued to search the reeds. Further on, the stream-bed became smaller, the soft mud deeper,

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and the banks under the surface steeper, and soon the elephant began to show signs of suspecting the bottom on which she trod. Then, directed by the mahout, she tried to get on to the firm bank. The more she tried the more she sank, for immediately she ceased to progress, her great weight, with a top load of a heavy howdah and three men, told on the yielding bottom, and her struggles became frantic, and almost fierce. She uttered a peculiar low squeak of fear, and trembled violently, swaying her bulky body from side to side in her great efforts to pull up a leg, first on one side, then on the other, out of the sucking swamp. The mahout knew the danger of the quagmire to his elephant, and that, even if rescued, there was great risk of dislocation of a limb from the extreme violence of her struggles. He asked me, and the Bhil hunter who was behind me in the howdah, to jump out on the bank. I got out by watching my opportunity to jump clear when the elephant swayed towards the bank. The Bhil handed out the guns, but could not be induced to jump out himself. He was unable to speak in answer to what we said to him, and seemed dumb with terror and paralysed with fear. At last he pulled himself together to make the effort, and scrambled out of the howdah. In doing so he nearly fell into the mud alongside the elephant; and had it so happened, she would have trodden him down purposely, in her efforts to find firm footing.

All this had, as may well be imagined, caused considerable uproar, and a number of Bhil beaters came together on the spot. The mahout called to them to cut thick branches, and bring them for the elephant to put under her feet. Every Bhil is handy with the axe, and the beaters generally carried long-handled small ones for defence, and clearing away bush obstacles, so that branches were soon cut and brought. The elephant, prompted by her mahout, as

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well as by superior instinctive sagacity, began at once to push the branches under her feet, grasping the thick ends with her trunk and forcing them down transversely. She did this so cleverly and energetically that she soon found advantage in the support given, and with this feeling of confidence she redoubled her efforts, and became so desperately eager for material to grasp and push into the oozy ditch that she thrust out her trunk at her attendant coolie (the mahout's stable assistant), who was standing near her head, clearly with the intention of stuffing him into the ooze, and helping herself out of it; the coolie, fortunately, saw the cunning, wild look in her quick, small eye just in time, and jumped out of her reach. The mahout became aware of this danger to those standing near, and warned the Bhils to throw the branches to the elephant and not come too near her. Immediately she began to find a firm footing she recovered her senses, became obedient to the mahout, took a short rest, and managed to struggle on to the bank. I then mounted another elephant and went with Baigrie in search of the wounded tiger, which the trackers had now discovered to be quite near us. We found it less than 200 yards from the spot where this scene with the elephant had taken place. There it had lain concealed and quiet, through all the shouting and disturbance. We killed it after an exciting fight in which it charged our elephants several times at close quarters, and unsteadied them so much that straight shooting was difficult. It had been so disabled by a shot in the flank that it was unable to spring, and its charges were fierce rushes to bite the elephants' legs, which it did not succeed in doing. A clever elephant can generally keep off a tiger, under such circumstances, with stunning and crushing blows from its heavily toe-nailed feet.

As the shooting party was a special one, I had impressed upon Homa and his men my great desire

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to make it a very successful one, and they assured me of their intention to work so closely that every tiger seen by any of the "Sahibs" would certainly be bagged the same day or the next. This sounded rather boastful, but we were all ready in the end to acknowledge the perfect fulfilment of the trackers' boast. On one occasion there was an amusing difference of opinion as to the reality of what one of the Sahibs saw, but which the Bhil scout posted with him did not corroborate, and which none of the hunters were inclined to believe, the result, however, being to support the trackers' boast by the slaying of the biggest tiger of our bag.

Intelligence was brought of the "biggest tiger ever seen" having been tracked down on the left bank of the Mahi, at a place 7 miles distant from our camp, and on reaching the ground we found it to be most unfavourable for "driving." It was a wide, flat expanse of low, close, thorny bush, crossed by a deep nullah, with one or two small pools in it which were completely hidden by overhanging trees and underwood. There was a rocky height with tall trees on the further side of the nullah. Homa said it was a most difficult piece of ground to beat and to place the guns in satisfactorily. There were very few trees in the bush plain high enough to give a view and command over any distance, favourable to the sportsman. Homa, after enquiry from the local shikaris, believed the tiger to be in the deep, thickly-wooded nullah, by the side of a pool under the rocky ridge, and said that in such ground the chances were much against it being seen, should it move slowly and cautiously forward through the dense jungle.

The best arrangements under the circumstances were made, and the beat commenced. General Stewart was on the right flank point, and I was next to him. The four others of the party were to the left. The

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beat, which had to commence 2 miles off, was long in coming up, and when it was evident there was no tiger in front, I went to General Stewart, who told me that he had seen a large tiger pass slyly out round the flank of the beaters, and go behind them. I asked the Bhil scout posted with him about this, but he said no tiger had appeared, only a wild boar, which went back exactly as the Sahib said. On Hubla coming up he spoke of a bullock being seen to go forward, one of a herd in the bush: also of a young camel which had strayed from its companions browsing there, and that both had passed to their left and our right. Both Homa and Hubla declared it was unlikely a tiger would escape the scout's notice, but said, as the Sahib was positive he had seen the beast, they would collect the beaters, and take them back to do the drive all over again. Stewart said that probably the fumes of the strong "mahua" liquor drink of the previous night (for there had been the usual carouse, the Bhils being free drinkers when the shooting "tips" are good) had worked in the scout's head under the hot May sun during the long beat, and sent him to sleep. I reminded the trackers of what they had said that every tiger seen by one of the Sahibs would be bagged: they laughed good-humouredly, and said it was yet to be proved that the Sahib was right, and the scout wrong—tiger or boar?

Beaters and elephants were eager for water after their toilsome hot work in the heavy jungle, and they went to the Mahi stream to drink, which caused considerable delay in getting them all together again, and reforming the line where they had first commenced. At last, however, we heard the welcome bugle sound the "advance," and then found keen interest in keeping a sharp look-out. When the "beat" reached the rocky bit above the nullah, the Bhils were seen to become very excited, collecting

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in knots, some climbing the trees, and having stones handed up to them to throw. There was a great burst of shouting and tom-tomming: then a lull, followed by a storm of yells and howls, all pointing to a "find." Presently the bugler was heard sounding the "officers' call," and I knew that Homa wanted some of the guns there. Then I saw an elephant ploughing its way towards us through the thick bush, and going towards it, I found that the mahout had been sent with word of the big tiger seen by Stewart having been tracked into the nullah. It had returned to the same shady spot at a pool, whence he had been driven before, unseen by the beaters, and now, sulky to a degree after his long, hot walk, he refused to leave his cool retreat. The hunters and trackers kept him under observation in the nullah until we arrived, and then he was driven out and killed. He was a truly magnificent male, big and old; a veritable monarch of the jungle.

Signs of early approach of the south-west monsoon rains brought our pleasant party to a close on 16th May, after a most enjoyable time in the Kharwara jungles. The Bhil hunters ascribed our good luck and satisfactory bag to the favour of the monkey god, Hanuman, the popular deity of those parts, whom they were in the habit of pretending to propitiate by copious libations of the strong fermented liquor made from the flowers of the "mahua" tree, and the occasional sacrifice of a he-goat, for we used to give them the means to provide a plentiful feast and a long drink when we had a successful day. And before our party dispersed, they had good reason to be further well satisfied with our liberal parting tips.

Snakes were very plentiful at Kharwara during the warm, moist "Monsoon" season, but though often seen in our houses, no instance of snake-bite

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came under my personal observation; and this was also the case throughout my long service in India. Fortunately, snakes are as anxious to avoid human beings as the latter are to avoid them. I had many escapes from treading on snakes, and I once had just time to fire and blow off the head of a large one, which raised itself erect to strike at me as I suddenly came upon it in long grass, when out shooting. At another time I was about to step upon the tail of a snake, which had wound its length round a cool porous water-jar under my washstand, when, becoming aware of my presence, it rapidly unrolled itself and escaped. I generally found my dogs to be unerring scouts in discovering danger, and they were ever ready to give warning of snakes. One evening, on entering the drawing-room, they at once made for a table which had a cover, the corners of which touched the floor, concealing what might be underneath, and, barking loudly, they soon started a snake. At Kharwara I had a sporting spaniel which always accompanied me on my walks in the garden, where snakes were naturally more often to be seen, as the watering attracted frogs that serve them as food. My spaniel was ever on the alert there: snake-terror never made her take to headlong flight, but only to back to a safe distance, where she stood to bark and watch.

Some natives fear to harm a snake lest the Evil Spirit, of which they regard it to be an animal incarnation, do harm to them. They will assist towards its destruction by pointing it out, but will not raise a hand to kill it. At Kharwara I always had my gun in a safe place with small shot cartridges ready for use against snake intruders, and I cleared the premises of several from time to time. There was a very wicked-looking black snake, about 3 feet long, which had its hole in the partly exposed roots

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of a tree close to my house, and on the direct path from the servants' quarters. It was a terror to the domestics after dark, and I often saw a small oil light placed on a pile of stones at the foot of the tree, which they said was to frighten the snake, but which, one of them told me quietly, was to propitiate it as a sign of veneration. Their cry of "Kala samp!" (Black snake) was at times a hint to me to kill, as well as a warning to others, when they saw it. I was generally late with my gun, but at last I just managed to hit it as it glided into its hole and disappeared. Some days later, the gardener pointed out to me, with great satisfaction, legions of carnivorous ants crowding in and out of the hole, and said they were eating the black snake.

I was with the regiment in camp when a snake charmer came into the main street, and summoned the men with his rattling tom-tom and shrill reed-pipe to see his performance. On finding that he was welcome, he unslung the two baskets which held his snakes from his shoulder bamboo yoke, and commenced. One basket only had been uncovered, and several small snakes were out moving to his pipe-music, when the cover of the closed basket was gently lifted aside by the protruding tail of a large snake. A powerful terrier of mixed breed, appropriately named "Crib," which had accompanied me, and remained close at my heels uncertain as to what might happen, on seeing the moving tail of the snake close to him, sniffed at it with outstretched head and neck, ready to back away quickly; but on being patted and encouraged by my companion, he dashed forward, seized the tail, and ran off, dragging out of the overturned basket a snake about 5 feet in length, which, however, he promptly dropped on realising what was behind him. The snake pulled itself together, and remained curled up in a state of fear and semi-torpor, while the terrier barked

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furiously at it from a safe distance. The large snakes taken about for these performances are of a lethargic nature, and are exhibited on account of their size and docility. The snake charmer was afraid of the dog disputing with him the possession of the big snake, and begged me to call him off, after which he collected and covered up his reptile properties, and went away in high indignation.

The only injury I ever saw that was in the first instance attributed to snake-bite was the loss of a finger which an officer suffered under the belief that he had been bitten by a snake. When asleep at night he happened to cast his arm over the side of the bed, and was violently awakened by a sharp bite on one of his fingers. Calling for a light, he and the servant who brought it, on hasty examination, decided that the punctured marks were those of snake-bite, and, after tightly binding his arm in two places to stop circulation, he proceeded with the servant's assistance to cut off the bitten finger. In the meanwhile his dog-cart was made ready, and he was taken quickly to the regimental hospital, where medical treatment was promptly applied. On the surgeon afterwards examining the severed portion of the finger he pronounced the bite to be that of a rat! Sometime after when I met this officer, I felt my eyes drawn by a sort of fascination to his hand, and I saw the sign of what had been described to me.

General Donald Stewart had formerly been Deputy Adjutant-General, and for a time officiated as Adjutant-General in India; and therefore, having a large acquaintance with the *personnel* of the Army, he was consulted regarding an officer to be appointed First Assistant Adjutant-General at Army Head-quarters, with the prospect of becoming Deputy Adjutant-General in 1879. He said that the man for the post was commanding a regiment in Rajputana, and named me.

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The Commander-in-Chief having approved, I was duly appointed, and joined at Simla in April 1878. It was a coincidence in its similarity to my appointment in 1872, as I was again taken from an isolated small station in a jungle district to the gay summer capital of India, for most interesting work on the General Staff of the Army. The result of the move in this instance, however, was very different from what happened on the previous occasion, when I suffered a great disappointment through an "accident" such as, happily, rarely occurs. But I missed, as Adjutant-General, my good friend of old 95th and later days, General The Hon. Frederick Thesiger, he having been replaced by an officer of the Indian army. I also missed at first, when tied to the office, my free life in the Mewar regiment, and my talks with the sharp-eyed, quick-witted trackers and hunters, some of them influential native officers, whose knowledge of the tribal feuds and disputes, as well as of the haunts of game, helped me both at work and at play. But all the same I was glad to return to the busy military world, and to be able to look forward to professional advancement, which was unlikely to come to me had I remained in remote Rajputana.

Being in a manner behind the scenes at Army Head-quarters, I soon saw that we were drifting towards the second Afghan war. The Amir Sher Ali had made even the pretence of friendly relations impossible, and I was not surprised when I was asked for details regarding the Amir's refusal to permit the return journey of the Kashgar Mission through Badakhshan. This was one of many unfriendly acts on his part, the sum total of which signified undisguised hostility to the British Government. The climax was reached when he forcibly repulsed, at his outposts, an English envoy of high rank, of whose coming he had formal and timely announcement by a letter from the Viceroy of

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India, attesting the importance and urgency of the envoy's mission. This last act of indignity and defiance resulted in a proclamation of war (22nd November 1878), addressed by the Viceroy of India to the "Amir Sher Ali Khan of Kabul, to his Sirdars and subjects, and to all the people of Afghanistan," in which they were informed that the British Government had still no quarrel with the Sirdars and the people, and desired none, and that upon the Amir Sher Ali alone rested the responsibility of having exchanged the friendship for the hostility of the Empress of India.

After the proclamation of war I was directed by the Adjutant-General to remain at Simla in charge of what I called the "printing press," when the Commander-in-Chief should leave for the "front" as was proposed. I begged hard to be allowed to accompany him, but without success. When taking an evening walk on the Mall, and thinking over this great disappointment, and the need I had of an influential friend, at that moment a friend indeed appeared in Mr Lyall,[1] Foreign Secretary. He asked me what part I was to play in the war, and was surprised to hear that I was to remain with the office in Simla. He said that I had qualifications which could be used to better advantage by the Government, and spoke of the services of a senior officer being required by the Foreign Department for a contingent of troops to be furnished by the Punjab Sikh chiefs, who had volunteered to assist against their traditional enemies, the Afghans. I followed up this kind suggestion next day, and it ended in an interview with the Adjutant-General to request the Commander-in-Chief's permission to take temporary employment under the Indian Foreign Office for special service. When I was told that acceptance should carry with it loss of my lien on the appointment of Deputy Adjutant-General, I agreed to the

[1] The Right Hon. Sir Alfred Lyall, P.C., G.C.I.E., K.C.B.

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condition; but its application was never seriously contemplated. The Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Frederick Haines,[1] on being informed by the Adjutant-General of the circumstances of the case, said of me in a very complimentary manner that he wanted my services as much as, if not more than the Foreign Department, and that I should accompany him to the front. This restored my spirits, and I had the pleasure of thanking Mr Lyall for the good luck which had come to me through his timely assistance. I also told my friend, General Donald Stewart, who had come to Simla at that time for consultation with the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, he having been appointed to command the army to operate against Kandahar.

The Army Head-quarters camp was established at Lahore, where the Viceroy also took post on the outbreak of war. After the first operations, resulting in the defeat of the Afghans and their retreat from Jelalabad and Kuram, the Commander-in-Chief, with a few staff officers of whom I was one, passed up both lines of advance, visiting the positions taken up and held by the forces under General Sam Browne[2] and General Frederick Roberts.[3] Just before the visit to the Kuram force, the principal political officer with General Roberts, Colonel Waterfield[4] (Commissioner of the Peshawar district), had a fall from his horse in which his leg was badly broken, and as recovery was likely to be slow, I was asked to take his place. The Adjutant-General was, in the interests of his department, inclined to object to this, but the question was decided by the Commander-in-Chief giving his hearty approval. This opportunity of taking part in the campaign was fortunate

[1] Field-Marshal Sir Frederick Haines, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E.

[2] The late General Sir Sam Browne, V.C., G.C.B., K.C.S.I.

[3] Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, V.C., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., etc.

[4] The late Colonel W. Garrow Waterfield, C.S.I.

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for me, as the idea of the Commander-in-Chief remaining in the field had been necessarily abandoned, on the Government desiring his presence at their Council meetings during the continuance of the war. After this question of my employment with the Kuram force was settled in my favour, the Adjutant-General received a letter from General Donald Stewart at Kandahar, asking that "Tom Gordon" might be sent to his command as Assistant Adjutant-General in succession to Colonel James Hills, V.C., about to vacate on promotion to Major-General. Much as I would have liked and preferred this, the chance came too late, as I was under orders to take up the political appointment.

I took a very valuable recruit with me to my new post for the Intelligence Department, in the person of Nurab-Din, a Pathan from the Peshawar frontier, who was one of the small escort from the Guide corps sent with the Kashgar Mission in 1873. It had been arranged that all the men so sent with us then, should be able to read and write fairly, so that on emergency they might be able to make and read written reports and communications. Nurab-Din was utterly uneducated, but his powers of observation and memory were so remarkable, that the officer commanding the Guide corps recommended an exception being made in his favour, and accordingly Nurab-Din joined the Mission escort. He was a very quiet-looking man, with a far-away expression in his eyes, which, in combination with an assumed manner, and a peculiar style of speech when he chose, gave an appearance of weak inteilect. In the disguise of a "diwana," which means one of wandering mind, he could pass everywhere as an imbecile, and therefore under divine protection. I took him with me on the Pamir journey, and employed him on special service in the Oxus principalities, whence he returned to India by way of Kabul. For all this good work he was well rewarded, and he returned to Hoti Mardan, near

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Peshawar, where the Guide corps is stationed, to enjoy a well-earned rest.

He had come back, however, suffering from a bad abscess on the instep of his right foot, and this, which at first began to heal, after a time broke out afresh, and became so serious that amputation of the foot was considered necessary to prevent worse happening. Like most Mahomedans he objected strongly to amputation, and said he would rather take his discharge from the regiment, than submit to the loss of his foot. He was told it would, in that case, not be a question of the loss of his foot, but of his life. He said he was prepared for that, and held to his decision to take his discharge. He was further told that he was entitled to an "invalid" pension on amputation of his foot, and would forfeit all right to any pension whatever by persisting in taking his discharge; but he would not consent. The colonel commanding had a special regard for the man, and the medical officer made the case an exceptional one, allowing him to be treated as an out-patient. He was thus kept on the rolls of the corps for a considerable time, until further continuance was impossible, and he was then discharged at his own request, without pension, and with but a short time to live, as the doctors thought. But he had strong hope, and remembering that his old friend, Dr Bellew of the Kashgar Mission, who had also served with the Guide corps, was in a good professional position at Lahore, 300 miles off, he chartered an "ekka" (two-wheeled light cart with one pony) and went there to beg his opinion concerning his foot. Bellew thought the case incurable and dangerous, told him so in a kind, sympathetic manner, and assisted him with money for his return home. And I, on hearing from Bellew, also sent him some assistance.

When at Jelalabad with the Commander-in-Chief, I went to see my friend the commanding officer of the Guide corps, which was in camp there, and he told me

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of Nurab-Din being with him, waiting for any chance of employment which might offer. I engaged him to assist the caterer of our General Staff camp Mess in negotiating for supplies, and thus he came to be available for other service when I took up my new duties in the Kuram field force. He had recovered the use of his foot so far that he could walk any distance, but he could not run: as he put it to me, he could not do the military "double," but otherwise he was a good soldier. I employed him very successfully as a special messenger where risk had to be run. Eventually, in the second phase of the war, I sent him to Kabul to join Resaldar Mahomed Afzul Khan (late of the Kashgar Mission), who came to the front as a most valuable officer at that time, and was prominent in the negotiations with Abdul Rahman Khan, afterwards Amir. And in all the work of delivering communications and making use of his powers of observation, Nurab-Din rendered excellent service. When the war was over I made a full representation of his case, and obtained for him the rank and pension of a serjeant. He smiled with satisfaction when I told him that he had proved himself a first-rate doctor in saving his foot, which had afterwards served him so well.

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CHAPTER VII

(1879)

My instructions when I joined the Kuram force were to gain information regarding the warlike tribes and "make friends." I had plenty of opportunities to hear of current events in Kabul. I learnt, as was elsewhere known from other sources, that there had been much popular sympathy with Yakub Khan, whom his father, the Amir, had continued to treat with great severity up to the time of his flight from Kabul. He never appeared to contemplate his son's death, but he aimed at sapping his energies and weakening his mind. It was said that, while causing him to be kept in a state of constant suspense as to his fate, facilities were afforded him of obtaining opium or narcotics for the fullest gratification of Asiatic tastes. Thus Yakub was led to seek relief from the bodily and mental depression of long, close confinement, by recourse to soothing and enervating drugs. In the end he was said to be reduced to a state of indolence and indifference which unfitted him for energetic action. The Amir's favourite young son, Abdullah Jan, sickened and died in the end of August 1878, while the Russian Embassy was in Kabul, and thus the main cause of the father's jealousy of Yakub was removed; but still he kept him a prisoner. As late as the 8th of December following (this was after the defeat of his troops at Ali Musjid and Peiwar Kotal), he displayed the old animosity towards him, for in a letter of that date to the Viceroy of India, repeating his

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grievances against the British Government, he dwelt on the great annoyance caused to him by their mediation in favour of his "undutiful son, the ill-starred wretch, Mahomed Yakub Khan."

The despotic mind of Sher Ali had made him unreasonable and reckless beyond all bounds, and he showed to what lengths he was preparing to go when he said at Kabul, to Stolietoff the Russian Envoy, in a tone of calm madness: "You come to bathe Afghanistan in blood as Vicovitch did. . . ." This Vicovitch was the Russian Agent whose false promises brought on the first Afghan war. Sher Ali was about nineteen years of age when Captain Vicovitch was in Kabul in 1838, and being the favourite son of his father, Dost Mahomed, he must have known all that passed then. It is a matter of history how Sher Ali, two days after writing his letter of 8th December, turned to his gallant son, Yakub, hoping that he might yet be able to rally the disorganised troops, and lead them to victory as he had often done before. But it was too late; four years' cruel imprisonment had made Yakub a changed man, and he was now weak and nervous, and quite deficient in determination and self-reliance. Sher Ali fled from Kabul to Balkh, there to await the performance of the Russian promises of support which had encouraged him to go to war, and on realising that he had been deceived, he fell ill, and died at Mazar Sharif on the Oxus, on 21st February 1879. At the last his heart came round to Yakub, and before he died he formally appointed him his heir and successor. The Afghans remained true to their old choice, and Yakub became Amir without opposition.

One, variously named Zaman Beg, Zaman Khan, and Zaman Khan Effendi, accompanied Stolietoff's embassy to Kabul as interpreter, and made himself extremely useful in many ways. This was the same Effendi who accompanied the Atalik's envoy from

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Constantinople, and travelled with us to Kashgar in 1873. We had been previously warned of his true character and were on our guard with him. Before we left Yarkand, we heard that he had succeeded in establishing himself in the Atalik's confidence as adviser on Turkish, English, and Russian affairs.

About three and a half years later, I saw in a news report from Yarkand, after the reconquest of the country by the Chinese, that Zaman Beg had escaped with others to Russian territory in May 1877, when the Atalik came to his death either by violence or poison.

Colonel A. N. Kuropatkin,[1] head of the Russian Embassy to Kashgar in 1876, in his book "Kashgaria," thus describes his meeting with the Effendi at the Court of the Amir Yakub Beg :—

"Some days afterwards Zaman-Khan-Effendi came to us. He was entrusted by Yakub Beg with the conduct of the preliminary negotiations. Our surprise was very great when it appeared that Zaman Khan could speak Russian beautifully, and that he was well educated. (We conversed with him about England, with which country he appeared to have no sympathies, and about European affairs. He evinced very correct notions, and displayed an acquaintance with the situation of affairs in Tunis, Algeria, and Egypt.) He conveyed to us some details about his past, from which we gathered that he was an exile from the Caucasus; that he had received his education in Russia; and that for some political reason he had been obliged to fly to Constantinople. Thence, three years later, Zaman Khan had come to Kashgar, and from that time he had been with Yakub Beg in the capacity of trusted councillor. Zaman Khan had strong sympathies towards the Russians, and has, in fact, shown the bent of his feelings by deeds." Allusion is made to other visits in which Zaman Khan "amongst other things, several times repeated that Yakub Beg had disconnected himself from the English, as he well

[1] Late Minister of War, Russian Government, and later Commander-in-Chief in the Far East.

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understood what sort of people they were; that he had not paid attention to them when they sought to sow enmity between the Russians and himself; and that he now understood the advantage of depending on the Russians alone."

The Russians annexed Kokand in 1876, and at once entered on the work of establishing a border-line between their newly acquired possessions and Kashgaria. This resulted in Kuropatkin's embassy, which had a very long journey to make before reaching the ruler, Yakub Beg, who was at that time in camp at Kurla with his army, opposing the advance of the Chinese. The distance from Osh, the frontier town in Kokand, whence the embassy set out, to Kurla, is about 850 miles. Kuropatkin's mission was eminently successful. Yakub Beg knew well that Russian policy favoured the weak and peaceful Chinese rule in Kashgaria in preference to his own, and seeing the uncertainty of the issue of the struggle between the Chinese and himself, he was ready to assure Kuropatkin at their first meeting that he had "only one wish, and that was to preserve the friendship of the Governor-General of Turkistan; that he was a humble individual, and must rely upon the Russians." Thus encouraged, Kuropatkin says in his book: "I spoke to Yakub Beg of the necessity of subjecting himself to the will of the Governor-General of Turkistan." Yakub Beg had from the first been made to feel, in his direct dealings with Russia, that his position as an independent ruler was precarious in relation to his powerful neighbour; and he might well have thought that Baron von Kaulbars (whose embassy preceded Forsyth's) was paying him a doubtful compliment when, at the farewell interview, he congratulated him on being the first Asiatic prince who had concluded a treaty with Russia without the compulsion of previous defeat in the field. Kuropatkin left Yakub Beg's camp on 6th February,

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and arrived at Osh, in Kokand (renamed Fergana), on 28th March 1877. His book has a concluding chapter dealing with the events which happened after his departure, and in a foot-note he says:—

"Zaman Khan remained with Yakub Beg till his death (16th May 1877), and was present at the fall of the Kashgarian Monarchy. He then, with other adherents of Yakub Beg, fled to Russian territory, where he met with a hearty reception."

The following year, 1878, Zaman Khan's abilities would appear to have marked him out as a useful assistant in the Stolietoff Mission to Kabul. No doubt he could talk of the English mission to Kashgar having failed in its object owing to Russia's displeasure with the Atalik, whose death later was an indirect result of not placing himself under Russian protection on the annexation of Kokand. Under all the circumstances, the Effendi, with his Kashgarian experiences, must have had a grand opportunity in Kabul for his reasoning powers. In Kashgaria we judged him to be an adventurer working from love of intrigue, power, and money, and probably also a political exile labouring for the reward of pardon; whichever was his main object he no doubt succeeded in both, for the confidential position which he managed to obtain with the Atalik must have given him full opportunity to serve Russia's interests, as well as his own, to good advantage.

In the end of February 1879, Yakub Khan wrote to the Viceroy of India announcing his father's death, and his own undisputed succession as Amir; and at the same time he made overtures for a renewal of friendly relations with the British Government. But the negotiations dragged, as Afghan public opinion was strongly against any cession of territory, or the establishment of a British Envoy in Kabul. The

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moullas and other leaders openly declared that the war had been unpopular with the Afghans, who saw that its cause was personal, not national, and that in cultivating close relations with Russia, the Amir Sher Ali had acted in direct opposition to the advice of the "Padishah of Rūm," the Head of Islam, and against the feeling of the priesthood and the people, who desired to keep the country free from the presence of both Russians and English. They quoted the proclamation of war in which the British Government said they had no quarrel with the Afghan people, and desired none; that they were absolved from all responsibility for the hostile acts of the Amir Sher Ali; and as they, the people, had given no offence, so the British Government, wishing to respect their independence, would not willingly injure or interfere with them. The chiefs of the powerful Ghilzai tribe who held the approaches to the capital urged Yakub to make peace, and affected to believe that as the object of the British Government, in going to war, was to punish the Amir Sher Ali, and upset his pretensions, there was nothing now wanted from Afghanistan but a return to the old friendly relations. They said "The unfriendly Amir has been changed for a friendly one, so now there should be peace." Yakub knew that the British Government would not be satisfied with this barren result of the war, and while most reluctant to order the army to advance to Kabul, yet they were ready to face the necessity if forced on them; but as the popular voice continued to be raised against the British demands, he had to make a show of satisfying the national feeling. Thus the first negotiations failed, and there was talk of the war being resumed. Sher Ali being dead, the Afghans were said to regard an advance on Kabul to mean annexation of their country, and this they were determined to resist to the utmost. On the other hand, the British Government thought that an advance would

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have to be made before the terms of peace could be decided. There were signs that Yakub, while the negotiations were dragging, had advisers who organised a plan of campaign to meet the expected British advance in the spring. This plan was to defend the passes, attack the communications, and carry on a guerilla warfare, for they judged that the people would then be with them.

In view of the probable advance of General Roberts' force in co-operation with General Browne's from Gandamak, it was considered advisable to reconnoitre the alternative approaches to the long Shuturgardan pass, so as to outflank any strong resistance which might be made on the main route through the heavily wooded Hazar Darakht. This reconnaissance, which General Roberts asked me to conduct, had to be carried out as quietly as possible, and therefore no escort of our own troops could be taken. I arranged at short notice for a tribal escort of Jajis and Ghilzais, as if for an ordinary visit, and conducted a party of six selected officers, who were successful in obtaining the fullest information. We went up by the main route (23 miles), passed the night in an old fort near the summit of the pass (11,000 ft.), and returned by the alternative routes. I communicated my plan of return previously to but two of the officers, and next morning, when sending off the tribal escort to precede us and flank the main route for our supposed journey back that way as a *ruse*, I informed my own small party that we would follow slowly. On reaching a particular point about a mile down, I saw my two guides, as previously arranged, take a path leading along a side valley, and I then told my companions the concerted plan. The Afghan Governor of the Huriob district which we had occupied—a brave fellow, who had entered our service, and whom I knew to be "faithful to his salt"—was with me, and looked uneasy

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(for I had not taken him into my confidence), saying there might be trouble with the Ikhtiyar Khel Ghilzais, through whose lands we should have to pass; but I told him I *had* to do the business, on which he asked leave to gallop ahead, and give warning of our coming. I was obliged to trust him, and on reaching the tents and temporary huts of the clan, I found the head man awaiting me with an offering of bread, milk, and coloured eggs (Easter), of which we all partook. On taking leave, my liberal present completed the bargain, and we passed down safely, travelling in two parties by different routes. It was a successful reconnaissance, and the Ghilzai moulla, who aided me in it and provided the guides, received a good reward for himself and them.

While these preparations for the resumption of hostilities were being talked of, Yakub contrived to reopen negotiations, for he really desired to make peace on reasonable terms, and was only waiting till events should enable him to conclude a treaty. His affairs as Amir were in a bad state, and he had lost ground by his vacillation: at one time trying to attach the fighting party to his cause, at another listening to those who said there were rivals for the throne ready to make terms with the invaders. The latter influenced him most, and inclined him to give way to the English demands. On an offer being made to send a British envoy to Kabul to confer with him, he, fearing to refuse, and at the same time dreading the temper of the people towards an English officer appearing in the capital at that time, proposed himself to visit the British camp, and arrived at Gandamak on the 8th of May. He remained there more than four weeks, and learnt to understand the desire of England for a settlement of the "Afghan difficulty," for he was reported to have said to the chief political officer, when the negotiations were finally closed: "I think this treaty suits you as

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well as me." The treaty was concluded on 26th May, and Yakub remained at Gandamak until its ratification by the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, was delivered to him. By this treaty the command of the Khyber pass was lost to Afghanistan, the British red line was advanced to the Shuturgardan and Khojak passes, and a British envoy was admitted to reside at Kabul. Yakub evidently looked to secure the loyalty and goodwill of his troops by means of the money subsidy given to a friendly Amir, and thus to be able to protect the British Mission from insult or injury.

The Amir Dost Mahomed had strongly objected, at his meeting with Sir John Lawrence at Peshawar early in 1857, to a British officer at Kabul as Agent for his Government, and a native agent was substituted; Sher Ali, again in 1869, at his meeting with Lord Mayo, was understood to acquiesce in the residence of British agents anywhere in Afghanistan except at Kabul; while Yakub was said to have stated his inability to protect one anywhere but with himself at Kabul! Yakub bowed to stern necessity when he agreed to the conditions of peace which included the presence of a British envoy at Kabul. He knew it was impossible that the British Government, after going to war to avenge the aggravated insult of having their Embassy refused, and actually threatened with hostile repulse at the outposts, while that from Russia was received with remarkable ostentation, could submit to the loss of prestige which a continuance of the exclusion of their Envoy would convey to the Oriental mind, and accordingly Sir Louis Cavagnari was received in state at Kabul as British Envoy, on 25th July 1879.

By the Gandamak treaty a new province, comprising the Kuram and Huriob districts, extending to the Shuturgardan pass, taken from Afghanistan, was added to our possessions. It was proposed to form a second Guide corps of cavalry and infantry, with the addition

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of four mountain guns, under the command of a military officer who would be in administrative charge of the new province. This appointment was tentatively offered to me, but I declined it as my conditions—viz., the rank of Brigadier-General, with military command of all troops in the province, as well as civil control—were not accepted. The offer was similarly made to another officer of my own rank, and was refused for the same reasons. My fear was that unless I was graded as a Brigadier-General, in event of a change of policy, or a redistribution or reduction of provincial administrative posts, I might find myself on the "unemployed list," of which I have previously spoken, whereas I had the appointment of Deputy Adjutant-General to fall back upon at that time, which always gave a good prospect of professional advancement.

We afterwards carried out other reconnaissances (in force) along our advanced frontier, but they were not so interesting as the Shuturgardan one. In the last of them it was intended that the greater part of the force which accompanied should return after one night's bivouac, and that I should take a detached party to examine the route towards Zurmutt and Ghazni; but while riding with General Roberts the first day, my horse became restive and fell over a hillside bridle-path, landing on the top of me 20 feet down, and giving me a badly bruised shoulder, a broken collar-bone, and other hurts, which completely disabled me. General Roberts countermanded the further reconnaissance which was to have been carried forward the next day, as I was unable to conduct it.

My recovery from this accident was very tedious, owing to the collar-bone fracture being at the point of junction with the shoulder, and consequently a difficult one to mend. It had to be reset twice, and when able to travel I was sent to Simla in July, and on the awful news of the massacre of the Kabul Embassy and escort

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being received shortly after, I returned to Kuram as Brigadier-General in military command and political charge. I reached Thull on 18th September, and began to inspect the posts as I passed up to Kuram and Alikhel. I found the troops much weakened and suffering severely from fever, and saw that the transport animals were in a very bad state. The pick of the troops and the transport had necessarily been taken for the force advancing on Kabul, and I soon discovered that I had many difficulties to contend with. Amongst these difficulties was a misunderstanding at Government Head - quarters concerning the actual number of effective troops in my command. For instance, in reference to my opinion concerning the safety of the long line of communications from Thull to Shuturgardan (115 miles), flanked and threatened by hostile tribes, I was officially informed (4th October 1879) through the Foreign Department, that with "nearly five thousand troops" at my disposal there was no cause for alarm. To this I replied by telegram the next day :—

"Regarding request for supports, I would meet impression which appears to prevail that I have considerable number of troops for communications with Shuturgardan by reference to my last disposition return, telegraphed Simla, 3rd October, which shows on that date, total effective strength 6 field, 2 mountain guns, 698 British Infantry, 321 Native Cavalry, 1,462 Native Infantry, including 13th just reached Thull."

The circumstance of my being in political charge as well as commanding the troops, and in the former capacity corresponding direct with the Central Government, produced a curious confusion of authority and judgment in relation to my military responsibilities, as may be gathered from the telegrams through the Foreign Department which are mentioned above. This department is personally administered by the Viceroy,

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and I found myself under the necessity of repeating to the Foreign Secretary, at one end of Simla, by telegram from the distant front, what had been previously communicated by the Chief of the Staff from the other end; for full reports were telegraphed daily to Army Head-quarters at Simla, and thence were promptly sent to the Military Department of the Government, which, until lately, was under the military member of the Viceroy's Council.

Unusually severe autumnal fever crippled the native troops badly, and in some places scurvy had appeared among them. The base hospital at Kuram was eventually crowded with one thousand sick and weakly men, belonging to regiments with the Kabul force as well as the Kuram command. The Quarter-Master-General's department was no doubt greatly troubled at the miserable state of the transport, and finally desired to remain in ignorance of the relative number of "unfit" to "fit," as my daily telegram stated. I was requested to omit this information, and merely to state the total number. I was deaf, however, to this suggestion, and continued to report what was very necessary, from my point of view at all events, should be known at Simla. The same department insisted on being puzzled as to the disappearance from the column "fit for duty" of half of the 11th Native Infantry. This regiment had originally been named for the Shuturgardan post in the arrangements hurriedly made at Simla, but when ordered up from the Kuram valley, the prevalence of low fever among them necessitated special inspection by a medical committee, which found three hundred and sixty of them unfit for service, and they were accordingly detained for treatment in the base hospital at Kuram: this left three hundred and fifty to proceed, but by the time they reached Alikhel (7,000 ft.), crossing *en route* the Peiwar pass (8,450 ft.), their condition was such (they were all more or less weakened by

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recent fever) that further medical inspection showed them to be unfit to go on to the high camp at the Shuturgardan pass. I then substituted the 21st Punjab Infantry, originally detailed for the Alikhel post, to take their place on the Shuturgardan. The 21st, being composed of the hardier races of the Punjab, did their work well at the Shuturgardan when the position was closely invested by the assembled tribes in the middle of October, simultaneously with the attack on Alikhel. It was afterwards plainly seen that the men of the 11th could not have stood the exposure in the trenches for several nights in succession, at a height of 10,900 feet, which the 3rd Sikhs and the 21st Punjab Infantry had to undergo.

My telegraphic reports to the Quarter-Master-General showed in numbers the "fit" and "unfit" of each regiment day by day, and also the numbers at the various posts; but so eager was the department to account for the reduced garrison at Alikhel by some supposed mistake in my daily disposition return, that I received a telegram:—

"Where is the other wing of the 11th?"

The number of men of that regiment shown as present at Alikhel being one-half of the total regimental strength made it appear in the Simla office that only one wing (four companies) had been sent on, instead of the whole corps as originally ordered. The answer was that the daily telegraphed report showed half of the regiment to be in the base hospital at Kuram. I wrote to the Chief of the Staff from Alikhel, 7th October 1879:—

"An impression seems to prevail that I have a large number of effective troops for guarding the long line of communications from Thull to the Shuturgardan. Regiments, Wings, and Companies are spoken of almost as if they represented a fixed number of men according to the establishment. But the Weekly Return

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of the Force has for many weeks past shown clearly the miserably reduced strength of the 1st Bengal Cavalry, Wing 13th Bengal Lancers, 11th, 20th, 21st, and 29th Native Infantry, and the 13th Native Infantry appeared on the scene in similar weak condition. Each corps should at once, from that Return, for effective strength at a time when the communications had to be well guarded, viz., at the close of the Ramazān, have been regarded as a Wing in the sense of representing actual numbers. I don't think I am overstating the case much when I put it in this way."

By the treaty concluded with Yakub Khan on 26th May, the Huriob valley, belonging to the Jaji tribe, and the Kuram district, held by the Turis, both subject to Afghanistan, had been ceded to India, and these were now included in British territory; but there was no time to mark the new boundary before the war broke out afresh. I had fully informed the Government by telegram of the signs of popular outbreak, and on 12th October I wrote regarding the state of feeling among the Jajis:—

"There can be no doubt that they are fully alive to the benefits accruing from a rule which gives them security of life and property, and brings them large profits on every side—especially in the carrying trade, as they have lately found—still their own innate hatred of every one outside the pale of Islam, the pressure exerted on them by their co-religionists beyond the border, and the uncertainty in their minds of the future, all tend to keep them on the *qui vive*, and ready to join against us when we may appear to them weak and unprepared. Just now the constant enquiry is, 'Are more troops coming up?' and all that goes on is keenly noticed and studied, not only by the people immediately about us, but by their brethren across the border."

The month of Ramazān, one of strict fast from sunrise to sunset, coincided with 24th August to 21st September of our Calendar that year (1879), and the

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onward movement against Kabul began at its close, when Mahomedan fanaticism is accentuated by fanatical exhortations, severe religious exercises, and self-denying restraints. The occasion then became the opportunity for a bigoted priesthood to preach death and destruction to the infidels, and the every-day talk in the village mosques (the usual meeting-place) was devoted to expressions of this idea, and to plans for its execution. Thus influenced by public opinion, formed and intensified by "mad moullas," our new subjects, the Jajis and Chakmanis, became actively hostile, though supposed to be friendly, or, at all events, neutral. For in order to secure their good behaviour during the advance on Kabul, General Sir Frederick Roberts had carried away with him several of the representative headmen of these tribes, who, while being witnesses to British triumph, were also to be hostages for tribal loyalty. But fanaticism, fanned to burning zeal by the preachings in Ramazān, swept away all considerations of personal and family feeling, and the tribesmen joined against us.

General Sir Frederick Roberts saw that the great extent of the lines of communication which would have to be gaurded was a serious cause for anxiety. He knew that it would be necessary to hold in strength the line from Thull to the Shuturgardan, a distance of 115 miles, until such time as the Khyber route could be opened, and in his despatch, dated 15th October, detailing the advance of his force from Kuram over the Shuturgardan pass, he wrote as follows regarding the danger to his communications:—

"Reports too reached me at the time that several of the regiments that had been concerned in the attacks upon the embassy at Kabul had left the capital, and with some guns marched towards the Spiga district of Zurmutt,[1]

[1] I have previously told of the accident which prevented me carrying out the reconnaissance of the route leading from Kuram and Alikhel towards Zurmutt.

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with the design of harassing our left flank, as we passed through the Hazar Darakht defile on our way to the Shuturgardan. The knowledge of this action on their part necessitated increased vigilance on mine, for from the place, Gardez (in the Zurmutt country), for which these troops had made, descents were possible at several places along our line of communication, namely, upon the Kuram valley itself through Chumkunni and Keraya; upon the Peiwar Kotal by the crest of the ridge which runs south-west from that place towards the Kuram river; and between Dreikullah and the Shuturgardan, more especially in the narrow defiles of the Hazar Darakht."

I had good intelligence of what was going on among the gathering tribesmen who had arranged a simultaneous attack on the Shuturgardan and Alikhel camps, and I knew on the 13th that over two thousand of them were taking up their positions that night to attack the latter at earliest dawn on the 14th. All our new subjects in the neighbourhood deserted us at this critical time. Headmen who were under obligation to us, and used to be daily on the camp, had been holding aloof in a very suspicious manner, and when the attack took place, only one man belonging to the Huriob, by name Mirak Shah (whom we had appointed Governor), of all the Afghans in our service, remained faithful to us. I have previously mentioned him as accompanying me in the reconnaissance of the Shuturgardan pass and its approaches. The Alikhel and Shamukhel Jajis, with whom we had been on the best of terms since the occupation, undertook, on payment, to patrol by night and give us notice of the movements of our enemy, but played us false that night and joined against us. The Jaji Militia, organised to garrison the towers and posts on the road to Shuturgardan, abandoned the whole line in a body, and made their appearance in their villages during the attack. The rising in the mountains had become general, and

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completely enveloped the Shuturgardan and Alikhel. The Mangals and the turbulent sections of the Jajis were the most active members of the hostile combination against Alikhel, and being joined by a large number of eager and restless spirits from the neighbouring Ghilzai and other tribes, who moved in advance of their main bodies, they became so greedily impatient for the spoil of the post, which they made certain of capturing, that on hearing of the near approach of five thousand Northern Ghilzais to join in the attack, they determined to rush the camp, and sack it before these should come to lessen largely every man's share of the plunder. They made the attack just one day before the Ghilzais arrived, and suffered a severe defeat. It had evidently been agreed to attack on the 15th, for the Ghilzais had pressed on rapidly during the night of the 14th, and in the very early morning of the 15th, when within 4 miles of our position, they learnt that the attack had been made the previous morning, and failed, and that the counter-attack delivered by the garrison had caused heavy loss to the assailants. They halted to consider the situation, and then sent in a messenger to me to say that having been deceived by the faithless Jajis and Mangals, they were ready to serve the English. It was a moulla from these same Ghilzais who had assisted me to carry out the Shuturgardan reconnaissance.

Notwithstanding the severe loss to the enemy on the 14th October, the leaders succeeded in again collecting the scattered bands as soon as their dead had been disposed of, and persuaded them that with the aid of crowds of Mangals, Mukbils, and Chakmanis then joining, they could yet overrun and destroy the camp at Alikhel. It was known that large supplies for the army were being collected there, and exciting tales were told of the immense amount of treasure in the camp ready to be sent to Kabul. So while religious

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enthusiasm looked to the bliss of Paradise in fighting the infidel, devouring greed looked to the plunder. The Chakmanis were the most important and best armed of the fresh reinforcements, and as their country is open to attack from Kuram, where our cavalry was stationed, I directed a demonstration to be made against their easily approached villages on the Kuram stream. The demonstration had the desired effect: the detachment was believed to be the advanced portion of a large force, and brought the Chakmanis and their neighbours, the Mukbils, back in hurried alarm to defend their homes. This broke up the tribal gathering, and helped to secure the line of communications, so that with reinforcements from the rear, and the movement towards the Shuturgardan of a detachment of all arms from the Kabul force, we were able to send on large convoys of stores of all kinds without loss or delay.

On winter setting in, the Shuturgardan post was evacuated, part of the garrison going to Kabul, and part rejoining my command. I took the opportunity then to settle accounts with our new Jaji subjects who had played us false in the attack on Alikhel, and summoned them to pay a heavy fine, and give hostages for future good conduct. These demands being complied with, I withdrew the troops from Alikhel on the 8th and 9th November, winter at that height (7,000 ft.) being severely uncomfortable to native troops in tents. I had heard of two hostile sections of the Shuturgardan Ghilzais, the Amram and the Karim Khel, making the usual winter migration from their high-lying pasture lands to lower grazing grounds, by a route which would give me a chance of intercepting them; and this I succeeded in doing. They found themselves with their flocks and herds in our power, and promptly paid up the fine of Rs.3,000 demanded for breaking their engagement made with Sir Frederick Roberts, to protect the

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road which lay through their territory. They had themselves become robbers on the road which they were paid to protect, and finally joined in attacking the Shuturgardan post. After all, they merely paid back what they made out of the transaction, but it was a satisfaction to make them pay, and to know of their disgust at having to refund, for Afghans are extremely avaricious and fond of money. This happened on the 10th November, and continuing our avenging march, we captured on the 12th six hundred cattle from the Chakmani tribe, who took a leading part in the attack on Alikhel. They paid a fine of Rs.5,000 the same evening, and the cattle were released. The same day a detachment fell upon the Mukbil clan in a secluded glen, and took security for a fine of Rs.1,500, which was paid six days later. They also had swelled the ranks of the enemy at Alikhel.

The Chakmanis are a prosperous and powerful tribe, occupying well-favoured lands on the Upper Kuram stream. Their chief, Saleh Khan, sent his son in attendance on Sir Frederick Roberts with the army to Kabul, as a proof of loyalty to the new sovereignty; but this did not prevent him joining in the rising which immediately followed. He joined with a will, too, and with the Koran in his hand, urged his fighting-men to follow him, and destroy the infidel. Here was an instance of what was known in the Scottish Highlands in 1745, when the father would send his son to "fight for Charlie," while he sided with the "Sassenach" to keep the ancestral lands from passing to others. On this occasion Saleh Khan reversed the position by himself taking the fighting risk, but he had no thought of what hard fate had in store for him—the loss of his money, which an Afghan loves as much as his life.

He had been fully warned of our approach to receive "on the spot" the fine of Rs.5,000, imposed for the active part he had taken in the tribal gathering against

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us. He had replied to the notification that such a sum of money had no existence in the whole of Keraya, the country of the Chakmanis, and that he could not therefore do the impossible. He was informed that nevertheless we would visit his country, and repeat the demand. We arrived in his neighbourhood on 11th November, and he came to the camp with a party of his people, whom he stated to be the tribal representatives, and a proposal was made that hostages should be accepted as security for deferred payment. The demand for immediate settlement was not seriously considered by them, and accordingly at earliest dawn next day our cavalry secured all the ways of escape from a group of prosperous villages, and, with the aid of infantry, took possession of six hundred cattle, cows, and plough oxen, which were driven to our camp preparatory to despatch to Kuram. Many of the village old women, the family drudges, accompanied the cows, screaming out much that was most uncomplimentary to the troops (native), and not omitting to include Saleh Khan in their shocking abuse, as the cause of all the trouble, loudly declaring at the same time that he and his friends were well able to pay the fine. In his final visit to the camp after the seizure of the cattle, Saleh Khan had to run the gauntlet of these shrieking furies, and he came before me bareheaded, a sign of deep disgrace, with tears of shame and rage in his eyes: he begged for "Delay, delay," he said, "if only one day more," but was told that the cattle would start in the early morning, and he could follow to the next camp with the money. At that time very cold weather had set in, and the howling women, who seemed to learn quickly all that was passing at the meeting, shouted that the cows would suffer if they were not housed that night as usual in winter. Saleh Khan at last yielded to obstinacy greater than his own, and the money was paid, after which the cattle were driven back to the

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villages by a noisy, happy crowd of men, women, and boys.

When these operations came to an end I was summoned to take up my post of Deputy Adjutant-General at Army Head-quarters. I may mention here that my information regarding a popular outbreak among the Afghans turned out to be quite correct, and that, while in the first phase of the war we had only the regular Afghan troops to oppose us, in the second we had the people, as they were led to believe that we meant to annex the whole of their country to India. We not only retired on a secure government of their own choice being established, but we also gave back the Huriob district, which had been annexed under the provisions of the treaty of 26th May. The Jajis had proved themselves faithless, and they lost more than we did by this retrocession. The Turis of the Kuram were loyal, and we gave them home rule and protection. Thus what I had feared, when I refused the appointment of administrator of that new frontier district, came to pass.

In due course, when the honours and rewards for services in the campaign were gazetted, I found myself C.B.

I shall close this chapter with a short mention of three interesting incidents which came within my observation and knowledge during the campaign. One is of an officer, acting as newspaper correspondent, and under military control, who was much puzzled, and a little alarmed, by a request to assist in getting back from the post, a letter he had sent to a provincial newspaper, describing the proceedings of a public durbar which had been held in camp. A gala parade of the troops had taken place in the morning to impress a crowd of tribesmen who came in with their representative "Jirga" deputies, and in the afternoon the durbar was held, at which, in a strong

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and sensible speech, they were told what would be expected of them as our subjects. The speech was a premature and indiscreet announcement in connection with the secret negotiations then being carried on between the Viceroy and the new Amir, Yakub Khan. The state of fanatical public opinion in Kabul made the Amir most reluctant to meet the British demand for a rectification of the frontier, which meant loss of territory, and his desire for absolute secrecy was based on the fear of serious trouble at the capital during his absence, should it become known that the peace conditions included the cession to India of any portion of Afghanistan. The officer who addressed the durbar was known for a Skobeloff-like tendency to political utterings, and on this occasion he seemed to have been carried away with the idea that he had authority to speak as he did; but evening reflection revealed a doubt in his mind as to the existence of a letter which he *thought* he had received. Careful search failed to find it, and then he feared that he had made a mistake, but hoped that what he had said might go no further than the camp and its neighbourhood. He remembered, however, the *pressing* hunger for news to be appeased, and he blandly asked a staff officer if any one had been present on the occasion who was likely to have acted as a newspaper correspondent, on which he was told of what was common knowledge (for officers of that force had been tacitly permitted to act as press correspondents) that a certain officer was very active in the news line, and doubtless had sent a detailed account of the day's doings to the leading paper in the Punjab provincial capital. This officer was interviewed, and became somewhat disturbed on being asked if he had so acted, for his connection with the "press" was known, and the durbar proceedings were of the most open and public character, and he could not understand that he had in any way committed

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an indiscretion; but on the object of the enquiry being explained, he became vastly amused with the suspicion that it was the Censor-in-Chief himself who had been indiscreet. The result was that the press correspondent was asked to authorise his letter being taken from the mail bag at a station 100 miles distant down the line, and returned to him through the post. He readily assented, and a telegram was sent to the officer in military command there, directing him to take the necessary steps to have the particular mail bag opened in the presence of himself and the chief Civil officer, and the letter to the editor taken out and returned. Delay thus occurred in the newspaper publishing a reduced account of the durbar sayings and doings.

The second is of a "greybeard" of the Jaji tribe, who intervened at a critical moment to put a question of international law which saved a man from the gallows, and this is how it happened. Transport was a very important matter when the preparations were being made for Sir Frederick Roberts' advance on Kabul in September 1879, and the Jaji carriers did a good paying business with their ponies and mules in our service. There was also a strong demand elsewhere for baggage animals, and the inducements to steal ours and smuggle them away over the mountains for sale were great. Afghans and Pathans are expert horse thieves, as experience on the frontier tells, and they began to practise their powers as such in our camp transport lines. At that time loss was doubly felt owing to the pressing need of every animal for the early advance, and the transport officers were at their wits' end to catch the thieves, and stop this loss. The officer in command summoned the nearest tribal elders before him, and threatened strong measures, but without effect. At last, hearing of a noted horse thief, named Sipahi, a native of the place, being seen about the

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camp, he had him arrested on suspicion, and threatened to hang him if the thefts continued. They continued, however, and then the elders were informed that unless the thefts stopped and the stolen animals were returned, Sipahi would certainly be hanged. They allowed that he was a horse thief during the Afghan rule, but they argued that he was only suspected now, and that there was no evidence produced against him. They had done their best, they said, to get the stolen animals returned, but without success. Preparations were then made for the execution: a high gibbet was erected on a prominent spot in camp, within sight of the Jaji villages; the Provost Serjeant with a party from a British regiment was in attendance, and the ready rope was there. A deputation of the elders made a last appeal to the officer, and begged mercy for the man; but there was no sign of relenting, and then one of them stepped forward and said: "Sahib, in your country do they hang people for offences committed in another country, and against another government?" The execution did not take place: the prisoner was remanded, and was afterwards deported to the Punjab, to be imprisoned till the end of the war.

The third is an incident of the Alikhel fight, and relates to a prisoner of war, a fine example of a fighting man who was true to his friends and brave to his enemies. He was an old man of the Mangal tribe, half moulla, half goatherd, of great stature and grand physique, with a voice like a trumpet, who established himself with about two hundred men, during the darkness, in a strong position close to the picquets, where the main attack was intended. He sheltered his party on the reverse side of a rise about 100 yards off, and began a steady, slow fire when daylight appeared. The men placed their matchlocks flush on the high ground above them and fired without exposing themselves. Behind, on the broken hillsides and in the

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sheltered ravines, were from a thousand to twelve hundred men, instructed to follow the moulla's rush. He had declared his readiness to prove his supernatural and victorious powers by dashing at the three guns placed on a commanding position in the camp, and rendering them harmless by throwing his shaggy goat-skin mantle over their muzzles. This fanatic showed real military genius in devising a means of imbuing his men with courage and confidence to carry them straight for the strongest part of the camp. Had the supports closed up as he urged them to do by voice and gesture, there would have been wild work on that side of the camp. But they remained at too great a distance to enable the moulla leader to press home his attack. The crowds on the hillsides offered a target to the guns, and some well-directed shells made them scatter and creep to cover. Those in the ravines kept close too long, and in the end were caught in a counter-attack.

The moulla could see his supports hanging about, hesitating to come on, but believing in himself, he clung to his position, and waited to observe the effect of an attack which had been concerted to take place on the opposite side of the camp. I saw this from the three-gun battery, and as it demanded attention he was simply held in check until I had made certain of the safety of the camp on all sides. When the further attack had been repulsed, I let the troops go, and vigorous counter-attacks were made. The check to the moulla's party had cooled their ardour, yet they held their ground, and as it was seen that its nature protected them too well from our fire, a bayonet charge was suddenly made. The leader, conspicuous by his tall form and bold front, gallantly encouraged his men to stand and fight, but they gave way and ran, leaving over twenty of their number dead on the ground. The old moulla would have been bayoneted had not Mirak

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Shah, the Afghan Governor who had remained faithful to his trust, and whose fighting instincts led him to accompany this charge, called out to him to throw down his arms and surrender. Seeing that all was lost he cast away his long sword-like knife, and, breathless from excitement and frantic shouting, sank to the ground, staring blankly at his captors.

When the fight and pursuit were over he was brought before me to be questioned regarding the rising. He knelt down silently, and removing his turban from his head placed it at my feet in sign of submission. When told to rise up he said in a quiet tone, "Sahib, I am your captive, spare my life." He had been surprised to find a friend when bullets and bayonets were dealing out death, and what he had afterwards heard gave him hope of mercy. He had been accustomed to preach and practise death and destruction to all enemies, and while he had not shrunk from meeting death in the furious bayonet charge, yet he gratefully accepted quarter; and now, on finding good where he believed only evil could exist, he began to view the "infidel English" in a very different light, and he asked for his life with a look in his face which showed that he knew it was safe. He was Gulnŭr (the rose light), a moulla of the Mangal tribe, and said his congregation were so poor, that in order to make a living, he had to combine the labours of a goatherd with his profession of priest. He had never seen an Englishman before, and said he had been told that all English were heretics, and to kill one gave a passport to heaven. He mentioned this in a frank, simple manner by way of explaining why he was foremost in the fray. He gave some reliable general information concerning the hostile movement among the tribes, but declared his ignorance of its organisation and active leaders. I told him that he had fought well, that I had witnessed and admired his bravery, and that

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it was not our custom to put simple prisoners of war to death.

The following day, when I enquired further from him regarding certain individuals, he affected not to understand, and merely said: "You promised me my life yesterday—yes, you did! You gave me my life, and I know you keep your word." I told him his life was quite safe, and there was no fear whatever of the promise being broken. Having become assured of this, he gave trivial information, but steadily declared that he had no knowledge of anything important. He showed most distinctly that he would not betray his companions or their cause, and it was impossible not to respect this rough champion of the Moslem faith, who was so true to his friends and brave to his enemies. He was kept a close prisoner, and appeared quite resigned while he remained in Alikhel, but on being told that he was to be deported to India till the war was over, he gave way to his feelings, and said that being an old man he would never see his native hills again. The dwellers in the cool mountain tracts of Afghanistan have the greatest dread of the heat of India in summer, and Gulnŭr quite believed that it would kill him. He was sent away from Alikhel along with the horse thief, Sipahi, who also was sentenced to temporary banishment; and as a precaution against escape the two were handcuffed together. It was a strange coupling, the soldier-priest and the common thief, but it was necessary to take precautions against flight or rescue, for both had many friends and sympathisers on the watch ready to take advantage of any opportunity.

Afterwards at Kuram, where Gulnŭr was detained pending arrangements for the further journey, I was haunted by his three sons, fine tall men, who came to try to ransom their father, offering Rs.200 for his liberty. On finding this impossible, they begged that one of

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themselves might be taken in his place, pleading that, as he was an old man, and could not possibly live long in his own country even, the change to India would certainly kill him. It was explained to them that their father would be kindly treated in the cool northern part of the Punjab, where he was going until the war was over, and he would then be released. The sons had made extraordinary efforts to raise the money for the old man's ransom, and the fact of such a large sum as Rs.200 being collected among the desperately poor members of the moulla's congregation showed how strong the feeling was in his favour. The Mangals are quite the poorest as well as the wildest of the tribes in that quarter, and with them money has a very high value. The usual "blood money," when compensation for a life is accepted, is about Rs.50, so that they showed a high appreciation of Gulnŭr in the amount offered for his release. After a time Gulnŭr and Sipahi reached Rawal Pindi in the Punjab, and were there confined as simple prisoners. I did not forget the old goatherd-priest, and on the termination of the war I took steps to have him liberated and sent home; but I then learnt to my great regret that his presentiment had proved true, as he had died a short time before. Sipahi, the robber, lived to return, and tell of the end of gallant Gulnŭr.

I had the consolation of knowing that I did my best for the old man, and I think I may say that I saved him from a violent death at Alikhel under circumstances which to the Mahomedan mind mean peculiar degradation. A suggestion to hang the moulla was communicated to me from a superior officer, but there was no reason to inflict such a penalty, and I ignored it. I was the responsible authority; I knew what I was about when I settled the case, and no question of my right to act as I did, or concerning the justice of my decision, was ever raised.

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CHAPTER VIII

(1881-1887)

In January 1881 a rising took place among the Sontals, a semi-civilised people inhabiting what is known as the Sontal Pergunnahs, about 200 miles north of Calcutta, where the coal mines are situated, and the Civil authorities, being unable to master it with the police at their disposal, asked for the assistance of a military force. Three regiments of Bengal and Madras infantry and two squadrons of Bengal cavalry were made available for this service, and I was named to command. The Sontals employ themselves in rude agriculture on jungle clearings, and as woodcutters, charcoal burners, and gatherers of forest produce; and on the opening up of the coal mines, they adapted themselves readily to an industry in which their women and children could take part. Five thousand men with their families were said to be thus employed when the rising took place, and there were fears that their knowledge of the use of explosives and crowbars would be applied to damaging the railway line to Calcutta.

The attention of the whole of India had been directed to the late Afghan war, and thousands of camp followers had been drawn from all parts of the country to the frontier and beyond, many of whom had returned to spread exaggerated reports which, in the re-telling, were wonderfully distorted. The traditional belief with the people is that women are the prizes of war most appreciated by soldiers, and the extravagantly

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absurd rumour gained credit among the simple-minded Sontals, that as our troops had captured none from the Afghans, the Government was collecting women in India to give to them. The first general census of India was then being taken, and, suspicious at all times of a numbering of the people, the Sontals readily arrived at the conclusion that in the present instance it was connected with this rumour, more especially as the explanatory instructions issued by the local native authorities necessarily set forth that care was to be taken to distinguish between males and females, and special attention was drawn to the statement regarding age. The age question in census operations is generally a vexing one to the female mind, but in the present case the objections were not the usual sentimental ones. It was said that the word "dagh," which means mark, also scar, and brand, was used in the translated explanatory notes to signify the "star" which marked certain columns in the forms for special entries. Agitators, who are always ready in rural districts to gain importance and a living out of any popular excitement, went about explaining that the word "dagh" pointed to the branding of the women under a certain age for Government purposes, and it was understood that this was one of the causes of the rising.

There was no difficulty in restoring order when the troops arrived, and this was done without a shot being fired. I formed ten small columns of infantry, which marched and counter-marched through the whole district, the object being to show our power to the people. The punishment inflicted was in a form which deprived them of nothing of value in their idle state, for they had abandoned all work and were waiting on events. They were ordered to "hut" the troops at each camp with bush materials, and to cut grass and fodder for the horses and transport elephants. All

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else was strictly paid for. Clever axemen as they are this punishment was light enough, nevertheless it had an excellent moral effect in every way, and served its purpose well.

In preparing for these operations it was seen that the great difficulty would be transport. Very little was known of the country and the roads, and the few carts to be obtained were ascertained to be of the most primitive type, with very limited carrying capacity. Accordingly elephants, which are best suited for jungle tracts, were recommended, and these were made available from the depots at Lucknow, Allahabad, Dinapur, and Barrackpur (Calcutta). Over sixty were collected at various points, and then the question arose as to the green forage which could be got for them. The fact was soon apparent that the Intelligence Department of the Army, which deals with information as to topography, statistics of supplies, etc., was at fault, having paid little attention to the Lower Bengal districts, while their energies were directed to other quarters. We had to work without their assistance, and found the country easier than was expected; excellent elephant fodder also was found in abundance in the foliage and young branches of the "banyan" (wild fig) trees, which were sufficiently abundant when actively sought for. All the "zemindars" (land proprietors) had elephants for their processional purposes, and these were sometimes pressed for temporary service, for their owners had not always been as loyal as their traditional duties, connected with their land holdings, demanded. All over Lower Bengal every great landowner has an elephant to take him about his property, and to symbolise his power. In India the elephant always figures in the popular mind as the pomp which is inseparable from power. This duty occupied me five weeks, and I returned to Calcutta to find that the Adjutant-General had discovered the Presidency capital

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to have fewer pleasures for him during my absence than when I was present; this meaning, as he said, that he had to work longer hours, early and late.

Six weeks after (April 1881), a similar rising took place among the Bhil tribes in Mewar, Rajputana, from the same cause—the census operations; and as I knew the country and the people well, the Viceroy sent for me to consult regarding a force of the Rajputana local troops to put it down, which at the same time I was asked to command. But as the Commander-in-Chief (Sir Donald Stewart had now relieved Sir Frederick Haines) and the Adjutant-General were against my going, nothing came of this. I lost nothing, however, as on aid being offered by the Rajput chiefs who had Bhil subjects, the excitement abated, and the movement of troops was countermanded.

I introduce here an incident at a shooting party near Simla this season (1881) to show how resourceful the native gamekeeper in India can be in the matter of "shooting tips." In a previous chapter I have mentioned that Himalayan pheasants were to be found near Simla: they afforded fair sport to those who were prepared to work hard on the hillsides for moderate bags. Originally the shooting all round Simla was free, but latterly one of the Rajas had taken steps to preserve his game, and was able to show a good many birds at the autumn "shoots," to which he used to invite his European friends. Having heard that the Viceroy was fond of shooting, he arranged to have a special drive of the wooded hillsides for him and a select party of visitors, including the Commander-in-Chief. As affecting the point of the story I am about to tell, I would mention that the Viceroy was a known cool and experienced shot.

It was a great honour to the Raja to entertain as his shooting guests the two "Lord Sahibs"—the

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"Mulki Lat" (*lat* is the local rendering of *lord*) and the "Jungi Lat," the Civil and Military lords—and his dependents and retainers were fully alive to the chances of regal "tips." The "shoot" came off well, but in the final beat, which drew and drove down to the points where the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief were placed, a beater, when nearing the latter, was hit with a few pellets of shot. The chief shikari had a talk with the beater before he came forward to show his trivial hurts, of which, however, he made much, so as to get much rupee salve. It was known from what direction the shot had come, but the shrewd shikari had worked out in his mind all the probabilities and possibilities of the situation, and with well-feigned reluctance indicated another direction, that being where the Viceroy was standing during the beat. He knew well, as all natives know, that the Mulki Lat is far and away greater, and therefore richer, than the Jungi Lat, and accordingly, in the interests of all concerned—of whom he was undoubtly "number one"—he showed a proper hesitation in saying that he was ashamed, but felt obliged to speak the truth!—*and then he didn't.* All the brotherhood were ready with their say to support him, for, in greedy anticipation, their hands were working to be in the bag of rupees, which, of course, were forthcoming to a liberal extent.

I was appointed Brigadier-General and posted to the Rawal Pindi Brigade in October 1882. The Brigade was a large one during the drill season, consisting of five batteries of Royal Artillery, one regiment British cavalry, two regiments British infantry, one regiment native cavalry, two regiments native infantry, and one company sappers and miners; and this gathering made life very pleasant at Rawal Pindi. There was also the Murree hill-station to go to for change in the hot weather, and I took advantage

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of the opportunity of being so near Kashmir, to pay the "happy valley" another visit. In this year, 1883, I was gazetted to receive as a "reward for distinguished and meritorious service, a good service pension of £100 per annum."

In May 1884, I was transferred to the superior command of the Rohilkand district as a Brigadier-General of the first class, my twin brother, who had been posted to the Multan Brigade three weeks after I was appointed to the Rawal Pindi one, succeeding me in the latter. I joined my new command at Bareilly (the district head-quarters), a lovely station within a few hours' journey of the cool Himalayas. The district then had within its limits six military stations, three of them in the plains, and three in the hills, which allowed of pleasant and frequent change. Having the extensive wooded belt along the foot of the hills very near, Bareilly was a great central depot for commissariat elephants, which browsed and fed in the forest, and were brought into the station from time to time for inspection. During the visit of the military member of the Viceroy's Council (who has to do with the commissariat and other departments), between thirty and forty elephants were paraded for him to see, and one patriarch was pointed out as quite useless from great age. He was a magnificent-looking animal, and was said to have taken part in most of the important State processions and ceremonials for quite half a century. The departmental officer in charge stated that he had been under treatment a long time for internal strain, caused by his load of tents becoming excessive owing to rain and mud at a camp of exercise, and that a Veterinary Committee having condemned him to be destroyed, as being beyond recovery, it had been decided to poison him. This was sanctioned, and the old elephant was led away by his mahout. He might well have been

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allowed to range the forest with the rest of the herd, but that, of course, meant the expense of a mahout (keeper) and liberal etceteras, and as the Commissariat Department had no margin for old age pensions or compassionate allowances for elephants, the faithful old servant was to die. It was better than being sold, however, as was often the fate of elephants when no longer fit for hard work. I kept a note of some pathetic lines which were published in the *Pioneer* on the reverie of a female elephant, named "Pounchall," whose sale by auction at the Lucknow Transport Office had been posted up. The elephant sees the notice on the well, where she is taken to drink, and with the "tongue of its condition," as the Orientals express it, says :—

"What's this notice posted here
On the well—
Who can tell?
Will there be a Russian war,
Or is it for a grand durbar?
Come Mahout,
What's it all about?
A female elephant for sale!
Nay—who—who?
Tell me true
Not—'Pounchall,' Oh to think of it!
Leave the well—I cannot drink of it!
Just now 'twas day, dear old *Mahout*
How dark it gets—the sun's put out!"

There were several other verses, and they ended thus :—

" . . . Ah well!
Elephants, men—we all get old—
I never heard that men were sold!"

The elephant I have mentioned, whose death by poison was decreed, died suddenly, just as the arrangements were being made to poison him. About mid-day, in the elephant lines, when all were alert, looking for the mid-day feed, he suddenly threw up his trunk,

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trumpeted a shrill blast, and fell forward dead; something internal had happened which put a sudden end to his life. The mahouts declared that he had heard what was said about his death, knew what was ordered, and would not wait for others to do painfully what he could do painlessly, without troubling any one.

We know that the mahout has a firm belief in his elephant's understanding being as good as a man's, the only difference being want of speech. As an instance of this there is an old story from the "Elephant Lines," illustrating how an elephant indicated plainly by an act, at a periodical superior inspection of the food supply, what his want of speech prevented him doing by word. When the elephants are kept in cantonments they get a daily ration of flour, coarse sugar, and rancid butter, in addition to fodder. Mahouts are known to partake of this ration to a small extent just as the syce pilfers some of the horses' gram (pulse), which, when parched, makes a palatable addition to his flour cakes. In this instance the mahout was in the habit of exceeding the amount of pilfering sanctioned by general usage, and the elephant saw and knew by comparisons that he was being badly treated. He felt acutely that he had a real grievance, and evidently thought out a means of bringing it to the notice of the inspecting officer. When this official passed down the line of elephants, looking at their general appearance and examining the food, the elephant, in his presence, divided his pile of flour cakes into two portions with his trunk, and placed one portion in front of the mahout. The meaning could not possibly be misunderstood: an enquiry followed, and the mahout was dismissed.

The superior intelligence of the elephant, however, sometimes has the disadvantage of making it a victim to "nerves." In fact the elephant may be called a very nervous animal. It is ludicrous to see one

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alarmed at even the smallest dog running harmlessly behind it: the great massive creature shuffles along hurriedly, looking back uneasily, and trying to turn out of the way of the little thing that is frightening it. Although elephants are quite an institution in tiger-hunting, it is only the exceptional ones with strong nerves which can be trusted to stand a tiger's charge, and even the best of these sometimes give way to disordered nerves at a critical moment, and bring shame on their keen, sporting mahouts. What are known as the "pad" elephants, used in driving dense jungle, are generally more or less unsteady: they find courage in numbers just as men do.

I have previously mentioned a case of a steady hunting elephant being suddenly terror-struck at the sight of a tiger, and the following is another instance of this which happened when I was at Bareilly. The Commissioner of the Division had a tiger-shooting party in the jungles near that station, and there being two ladies in his camp who were most desirous to see the exciting sport, it was arranged that advantage should be taken of the first safe opportunity. When the chance came, the ladies were put on the steadiest elephant in the camp, a tried animal at tigers, which could be trusted, it was thought, to face any danger. When they arrived at the jungle where the tiger was marked down, the precaution was taken of putting the ladies on the side of the drive where the ground was comparatively open, as that was supposed to be the safest place. It so happened that the tiger slipped out unobserved there, and most unexpectedly came face to face with their elephant, which was so startled that it turned and fled at its fastest pace, a rapidly shuffling and excruciatingly jolting step. (I have had experience of this myself on a runaway elephant.) The elephant, mad with fear, became at once completely beyond the mahout's control, and, heedless of cries and blows, rushed away aimlessly

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in the wildest alarm, with all his intelligence and habits of obedience gone. There was nothing for it but to hold on, and hope for him to slacken his pace, when he might be induced to listen to the mahout. At last a reed and thatch hut-hamlet was seen, and the elephant fortunately went towards it, when the sight of human beings seemed to reassure him a little, so that the mahout was able to make him kneel. He told the ladies to get down immediately, as he felt uncertain of the palpitating elephant. They just managed to descend in time, for the elephant, again overcome by terror and nerves, was up and away at a headlong pace, the mahout, however, contriving to slip off as it started. The tiger and the elephant had fled from each other in mutual fear, and the former, on being headed, went back to the jungle and was eventually killed. This occupied some time, and then enquiry was made for the ladies. As they could not be found, it was surmised that they had returned to the camp, and a messenger was sent there to ascertain. When it became known that they were not in the camp a wide search was made, and at last the mahout was met returning to tell what had happened, and the gentlemen of the party went to bring in the ladies. They had remained in the village with the native servant who had been with them on the elephant, and who had done all that was possible for their comfort. The unhappy elephant, after roaming about for some hours, was also recovered.

My friend, Sir Alfred Lyall, who had been Foreign Secretary, was now Lieutenant-Governor of the North-western Provinces, and as his summer head-quarters were at Naini Tal, which was also my place of residence for three months of the hot season, I had many opportunities of meeting him there. In December 1884 he invited me to meet the Viceroy and Lady Dufferin, who were then visiting him at Lucknow, one of his provincial places of residence. It had been arranged

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that the Viceroy should see the veteran survivors of the loyal and faithful native soldiers who served with the British garrison in the Residency there, during its investment by the mutineers and rebels in 1857. These men proved in a brilliant manner their unswerving fidelity and devoted bravery, and rendered splendid services. On all special occasions, the survivors of that band of native heroes, who may be within easy journey, and able to travel, are summoned to Lucknow to see and be seen. Those are always occasions of joy and satisfaction to them, and care is taken that they return to their homes with generous proof of the fullest appreciation of their fine example of loyalty and courage.

Lord Dufferin, unfortunately, had contracted slight fever at Lucknow, and was unable to review these veterans, but Lady Dufferin undertook to see them, and communicate a kind and complimentary message from the Viceroy; and I accompanied Her Excellency in my capacity as Honorary Aide-de-Camp. The duty was most gracefully performed by Her Excellency, and the veterans were highly pleased. As we passed down their line I noticed one man wearing, suspended round his neck, a medal, much rubbed away, but showing an unusual design. The wearer was very old and listless-looking, and was clothed in a faded artillery uniform of blue cotton cloth. When I spoke to him he brightened up and tried to tell me his military history. But he mouthed his words so that I could not understand him, and then I saw that he was absolutely toothless. He had a lad, however, with him, who was delighted to act as interpreter, and I learnt that he had been in the artillery of the "Kumpani Bahadur" (Honourable East India Company), and he laid great stress on being a "golundaz" of the artillery, not a "drabé." The first is Hindustani for gunner, the second is a native corruption of driver.

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The field artillery of those days had guns dragged by bullocks, and he did not wish to be confounded with a bullock driver—often called a "tail-twister," as that describes the usual means by which the patient ox is urged to move smartly. I had to listen to all this before I could open my enquiry as to the old medal worn round his neck; but when we came to that his animation and gestures showed how proud he was to tell about it. At close fighting during the investment he had killed his man, and took the medal off *his* neck. As far as I could make out during my rapid look, it was the medal for the campaigns against the Mahrattas in the first quarter of the last century, and he regarded it as a talisman. I told him that he had good right to wear it as the spoil of the enemy, and hoped it would give him luck and long life to enjoy his pension for many many years, on which he saluted me with a long grin of great satisfaction.

In March 1885 I was deputed by Lord Dufferin to proceed to the Afghan frontier to meet the Amir, Abdul Rahman Khan, and accompany him to Rawal Pindi for the meeting between them there. I found this duty to be most interesting and agreeable in every way. My knowledge of Persian enabled me to make many friends among the Afghans, and to understand clearly many things which otherwise would have been but matters for conjecture or superficial observation. The Amir was clever and loquacious, and gave me favourable opportunities of studying how we stood with the Afghans and himself. He seemed to appreciate having a listener like myself (for he had previously asked about my travels in Central Asia) to converse with, and on the evening of his arrival at Jumrud, near Peshawar, he spoke much about his flight from Afghanistan in 1868, when his cousin, Sher Ali, became undisputed Amir. We sat outside his tent looking towards the Peshawar valley, then covered with rich crops. He spoke of the

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fertile, well-inhabited plains of India which lay before us, and said he was glad to have the opportunity to see them. He mentioned his wanderings in the Waziri country when fleeing from Sher Ali, and said he had received an invitation to visit British territory, but as we had then established friendly relations with Sher Ali, he thought it wiser not to accept it, although he knew that he would have the same honourable and liberal treatment that the British Government invariably gives to princes of fallen fortune. His mind was evidently dwelling with great satisfaction on his altered circumstances, in that he was now visiting India as an independent sovereign prince and a royal guest, for he had been made fully acquainted with all the preparations to give him a splendid reception, and he had already been saluted in ceremonial regal style. I heard that on the journey down he had talked much about his coming reception, evidently speculating in his mind if it would be a kingly one, and as good as that given to Sher Ali. He may have imagined that as the British Government had helped to place him on the throne, there might be an inclination to regard him as less of an independent Amir than Sher Ali, who won his way to power without our aid.

It may be as well to recount here that Abdul Rahman, the eldest son of Sher Ali's eldest brother, Afzul, had, by his military genius, won the throne of Kabul for his father in 1865, and kept it for him till his death in 1867, when Azim, his father's full brother, succeeded, and whom Abdul Rahman continued to serve faithfully as Commander-in-Chief. The accession of both of these brothers to the Kabul throne was formally recognised by the Government of India. But the ex-Amir, Sher Ali, in the meanwhile was strengthening himself in Turkistan for another attempt to recover the throne, and he successfully advanced on Kandahar and Kabul in 1868. The Amir

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Azim, and his nephew, Abdul Rahman, suffered a crushing defeat in the end of the year, and sought safety in flight. It was then that they went towards the frontier of India with the intention of taking refuge there, but afterwards in uncertainty they turned towards Persia, where, after many months of wandering, they found honourable asylum. Azim died there, and Abdul Rahman journeyed on by way of Khiva and Bokhara to Samarkand, where he was hospitably received by the Russians, and remained as their honoured guest for eleven years, until he returned to Kabul in 1880 as Amir.

I had to judge regarding the Amir by his manner and expression as well as by his words. I do not think his anxiety regarding his reception had so much to do with his own feelings as with the probable effect on others; and those others were in Samarkand and Tashkend. He had been in comparative poverty there, and had to face slight from Russian, Afghan, and Usbeg acquaintances, and he was anxious that these people should hear of the honour shown to him by a nation second to none in the world. For as soon as he had been apprised of the splendid arrangements made for his reception, his thoughts seemed at once to carry him back to those dark days in Samarkand, and he made a rapid calculation as to how soon the news would travel there by wire *viâ* England, Russia, and Turkistan. His remark, delivered with great satisfaction at Jumrud, was, "My arrival and the manner of my reception will be known in Samarkand in thirty-six hours." So absorbed was he with this subject that in the evening of that day he plainly showed he had been again calculating the time it would take for the news to reach the people of Samarkand, as he said, "They will hear the news some hours earlier than I thought."

I will not go into the details of the Amir's arrival

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at Peshawar and at Rawal Pindi, of his first meeting with Lord Dufferin, and of the great durbar at which he made his public declaration of alliance with England, but will merely mention a few incidents at that time of which I have personal knowledge. It was evident that the subject of the Amir's speech at the durbar was previously discussed with his Sirdars, and that they had been in a state of anxious expectation as to the declaration of alliance with England. I gathered this from what was said in my presence at the close of the durbar. As I entered a carriage with the Afghan Commander-in-Chief and the Dabir-ul-Mulk (Home Secretary), the former, in the noise of closing the door, said with a great look of eagerness and satisfaction, "I feel happy now." This was the first opportunity they had of speaking on the subject, and in the excitement of the moment, they appeared quite unconscious of my presence. I mention this to show that the alliance with England was popular, and I think it is so still.

There can be no doubt that great efforts were made to prevent the Amir carrying out his visit to India. The subject was much discussed in open court at Kabul, and the Russian party there was not backward in telling what was said at Tashkend about it. The Amir told me that he had personally heard from Samarkand of the surprise and annoyance shown by the Russian General there at his going to India; and that it had been said he would be deceived by the English, and evil, not good, would result to him. It would almost seem that while the Amir was enjoying in his mind the idea of the news of his splendid reception in India creating a sensation in Samarkand, the Russians were preparing a surprise for him, to produce a dramatic effect throughout Afghanistan, which would enhance their prestige and lower his, as well as that of the British Government. He

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reached Jumrud on 29th March, Peshawar 30th, and Rawal Pindi 31st.

He and the Viceroy exchanged visits the following day, and on the evening of that day, a telegram from his representative (Kazi Saat-ud-Din) with General Sir Peter Lumsden's boundary commission, near Herat, dated 28th March, was forwarded to him from Meshed, through the Foreign Office. Being written in English, I was asked to read and translate it to him. It was to the effect that a Russian General, with a force of eight hundred infantry and six hundred cavalry, and more infantry and artillery following, had taken up a threatening position opposite Panjdeh, and that the Afghan Naib Salar (Deputy-Governor) and the General, Ghaus-ed-Din, had entrenched the post and were determined to defend it. The Amir received this report very calmly, and said: "Of course they will defend their post. Your newspapers are always saying that I am too friendly to the Russians. Now we shall see: the Afghans will certainly fight the Russians, for this movement on their part is unprovoked; they are seeking for war."

By a most remarkable coincidence, the startling news of the post being taken, with heavy loss to the Afghans, was communicated to the Amir by a telegram (which I read to him) from the same official with the boundary commission, on the evening of the day, 8th April, that he made his declaration of alliance with England at the great durbar in Rawal Pindi. There was all the appearance of studied cause and effect in this incident taking place while the British commission to settle the boundary question between Russia and Afghanistan was on the spot, and the Amir was a kingly guest in the Viceroy's camp in India. When I read the second telegram to him, he said bitterly: "This is Russian friendship, is it? Is killing several hundreds of my men, and wounding my General, a sign of their

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friendship?" This unjustifiable attack roused public opinion in England to a point approaching war, but the Amir was earnest in his expressed wish that the Afghans should first be allowed to meet invasion without external military assistance. He is understood to have begged that not one British soldier should cross the frontier until aid was asked. An Afghan of note said: "Let them shed their blood; the nation will then be roused to revenge, and your opportunity will come. Do not rush hastily into Afghanistan unasked. Prepare and wait." This was the key-note of Abdul Rahman's policy.

A few days later, the Amir showed me a letter which he had just then received from Sirdar Abdullah Jan Khan, Governor of Badakhshan, forwarding a letter to himself from the Russian Governor of the Zarafshan district, Samarkand. The letter from the latter was written in Turki, and said that the Russian Government desired to be on the most friendly terms with the Amir Abdul Rahman, and in the matter of the boundary towards Herat, it would be well for the Amir to admit that the whole of the Saryk Turkomans were beyond Afghan limits, and in no way subject to Afghanistan; that it was desired to avoid disputes with the Amir, and to prevent any one from giving him trouble (this had reference to rival claimants for the Kabul throne). The Amir explained that he had been intimate with the writer at Samarkand, and used to play chess with him, and accompany him out shooting. He again made bitter remarks on Russian friendship, and said that, not content with the unprovoked attack at Panjdeh, they now expected him to give up subjects and territory. He went on to say: "I have been considering all this very deeply: without war now there cannot be real peace; the time for action has come, and I am preparing to act. If the quarrel is not settled now, it will be a much more serious one

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for us later." This view, I think, was quite correct. We know that English public opinion was in favour of disputing by force of arms the Russian advance on the Afghan frontier, and a Liberal Government had obtained a war credit of ten million sterling; and with the Afghans asking our assistance we would have been in a position to organise their forces so as to make them very efficient auxiliaries. Remembering that the time was twenty years ago, when they had not consolidated their power in Trans-Caspia, the Russians might then have received a check that would have affected their policy of expansion in Central Asia for a considerable time; and had our troops appeared in Afghanistan as invited friends and welcome allies, the gain would undoubtedly have been great in obliterating old animosities and facilitating future plans for the defence of India.

I accompanied the Amir on his return journey to Lundi Khana at the farther end of the Khyber pass. The tribesmen came in greater numbers to see him on his way back than when he passed down, which showed that his splendid reception in India had increased his prestige. His last camp was at Lundi Kotal, on the top of the pass, 4 miles from his own border. There was a very large concourse of tribesmen there to see him, and among them a great number of Shinwaris, a tribe which holds lands on both sides of the border. At that time there was considerable enmity on the part of the Afghan Shinwaris towards the Amir's officials and troops, owing to recent hostilities, and there was an idea that possibly some of them, from a feeling of revenge, might attempt the life of the Amir while within the British border. It was noticed when nearing the camp that the Shinwaris were in great numbers at one place, lining the path along which we were riding, and that the Amir would pass within a few yards of them. They were

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all fully armed, many of them with breech-loading rifles, and all stood motionless, without a sound or sign of welcome or respect. Some of the Amir's troopers placed themselves between him and the Shinwaris, but he waved them aside, and rode down their front, looking them straight in the face with an expression of calm curiosity. When near the end of the line, a tall old man of spare, athletic figure, carrying a Martini rifle, who seemed to regard the Amir more keenly than the others, raised his voice loud in welcome and admiration, "Salam alaikim" (Peace be to thee), on which the whole crowd shouted out the same salutation, and the Amir gave them the friendly response, "Va alaikim 'a' salām" (And to you be peace). It was a relief to us to hear this hearty, "Pass friend. All's well."

I took leave of the Amir the next morning, and he then pinned on my breast his Barakzai diamond star, and the golden order of "Hurmat" (honour) which he had worn at the Rawal Pindi Durbar, and also presented me with a black Arab horse, to use, as he said, "in the service of England and Afghanistan." This was an allusion to my hope of being actively employed with the Afghan troops. The Commander-in-Chief, Gholam Hyder Khan, whispered to me when he said his good-bye, "I am always your friend; count on me," and many of the other Sirdars called out to me their friendly farewell. Much was said to me in long messages and last words from the Amir to communicate to the Viceroy at Simla, and when all was done, Lord Dufferin asked me if I thought Abdul Rahman would accept me as British Envoy at Kabul. I said that if the expected war broke out, doubtless he would, in connection with a special war subsidy; and this would probably have come to pass had hostilities commenced.

I rejoined my District command at Bareilly on

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1st May 1885. I had a very pleasant military picnic time—10th December 1885 to 27th January 1886—at the great field manœuvres which closed at Delhi in a fine show of troops, and which, I believe, greatly impressed the representatives sent from the armies of Europe and the United States of America.

In 1886 practical effect was given to a proposal for summer camps in the hills, as an experiment for the acclimatisation during their first year's service in India of young soldiers who might be considered unlikely to keep their health during the hot season. These men were to be in addition to the usual number sent each year to the various convalescent depots at the hill-stations. Curiously enough, of late years there had been a disinclination on the part of the men to accept the change from the hot plains to the cool hills, by going to these depots. To such an extent had this disinclination increased, that the "Fitzwygram" (Colonel Sir Frederick Fitzwygram's endowment) Himalayan summer homes for a certain number of men and non-commissioned officers of British cavalry, which were built at Ranikhet, were practically unoccupied in 1885, and as, under the "Trust" as it stood, they could only be used for that branch of the service, the necessary legal and other steps had to be taken to open them to the Royal Artillery; and even then, such partial success attended the extension of the privilege that the advisability was being considered of making them available for British infantry also. Since regimental institutes had been established on a better basis, and made more confortable and convenient, and the conditions of life in barracks generally had been improved, it was found that the men preferred the regimental home in the plains to the sanitorium in the hills. And this being the case, the young soldiers were equally pleased with their regimental life and its bazar sur-

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roundings, and the same, if not greater difficulty was experienced in getting them to regard favourably a change to tents in the hills. However, the experiment was to be made, and a camp was formed at a hill-station within my command to accommodate from three to four hundred young soldiers. Only one regiment in the Rohilkand district sent a detachment to the camp, and for the purposes of discipline and administration, the Colonel denuded a company of as many of its seasoned soldiers as vacancies were required, and filled it up with late arrivals, so that they were under experienced non-commissioned officers. I may here say that this was the best behaved company in the camp. The other companies were not so formed, and accordingly their discipline was lax, and conduct not good.

There was little for the men to do, and groups of the "baser sort" formed themselves into card and illicit drink clubs, which naturally produced irregularities and absences on duties and at roll calls. The composition of the camp brought men under non-commissioned officers not belonging to the same regiments, and these young soldiers, in their folly, sometimes confused a false idea of *esprit de corps* with their desire to set lawful authority at defiance, and affected to resent the interference, as they called it, of a stranger non-commissioned officer. There was one serjeant in particular, whom they knew as a man of strong character, who did his duty fearlessly, and him they used to anathematise freely and frequently. The idea grew that he should be removed in some way or other, and at last, at a full meeting of a particular group, it was agreed that he should be shot by one of their number to be decided by lot, and on further discussion it was suggested, that as they had cards, the "fatal card," the ace of spades, should decide. The pack was shuffled, every one

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taking a hand in this, and then the deal commenced. The card fell to a young soldier who did not belong to the serjeant's regiment, and in the afternoon of the same day he committed the deed of murder.

On that particular day the camp was in a most disorderly state, a number of men being drunk, and this accounted for the murder not being known at once. The serjeant was sitting on his cot with his coat off, drinking a cup of tea in a tent, the side walls of which on one side were raised for ventilation purposes, and the murderer, having taken a rifle (not his own) from an adjoining tent, and two cartridges from another, approached him from behind, and shot him through the back, death being almost immediate. He then replaced the rifle unobserved, as he thought, and disappeared. The sound of the shot was probably deadened in the interior of the tent, and the murder was not known at once. Little by little evidence was forthcoming, and by the evening the suspected man was arrested. His first act was to ask to see the chaplain of the camp (a late arrival in India), who was well known to all the men from the more than usual kindly personal interest he took in them. He was at that time absent for a few days, fishing in the neighbourhood, and on this being known, the man either wrote, or had a letter written to him, on receipt of which the chaplain returned to the camp, and had a private interview with the man. When the full preliminary enquiry had been completed, arrangements were made for the man's trial by general Court-martial; and at the same time the chaplain engaged, at his own expense, an English barrister for the defence, and himself assisted, so far as he could, as the prisoner's friend at the trial.

The proceedings of a general Court-martial have

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to be confirmed at Army Head-quarters before they are promulgated, and for a sentence of death, confirmation by the Head of the Government is necessary. There was considerable delay in this instance, and in the meanwhile the summer camp was broken up, and its late occupants had left to rejoin their respective regiments before the confirmed proceedings were received. An effort had been made by letter, anonymous or otherwise, to induce the Commander-in-Chief to regard the case as one for leniency, owing to extenuating circumstances in connection with the ace of spades incident which, it was urged, made the murder a matter of chance or an unpremeditated act. The origin of this letter or communication was very evident. It was through the enquiries, quietly conducted after receipt of this lettter, that the particulars here given of what probably took place previous to the murder, were made known as common talk in the camp. There appears to have been no doubt of the murder having been discussed by several, but the truth of the story about "the ace of spades" could not be established, not that it would have affected the justice of the verdict. The evidence against the prisoner was clear and conclusive, and it was manifestly in the interests of justice, and specially of discipline, that the sentence should take effect.

A senior officer who happened to visit the station in the hills where the trial took place, on hearing of the chaplain taking such a very prominent part in the defence, which was, inferentially, that the accused had not committed the murder, remarked that he must have known of the man's guilt, and how was it possible for him to satisfy his conscience, and to preach to the men "Thou shalt do no murder?" This was repeated to the chaplain, who was understood to say, that his horror at the idea of being present at an execution was such that he exerted himself to

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the utmost to avoid the dreadful duty. He was under the impression that in the event of a conviction the death sentence would be carried out at the place where the crime was committed. But owing to the delay in confirming the proceedings, the troops had left, and as the example of the punishment was for the murderer's comrades of his own regiment who had been in the summer camp, the sentence was carried out at the regimental station in the plains. We hardly ever hear of soldiers or sailors implicating comrades in their crimes, and in this instance nothing was revealed, though it was said for the prisoner, that one of the two men, whose rifle and cartridges he was stated to have taken, had committed the deed. The night before his execution, the condemned man asked to see the officer who had, in due course of duty, acted as public prosecutor in the case, and told him that there were men in the regiment who would "do for him" within a week of his death: needless to say nothing of the kind was ever attempted.

While enjoying the pleasant cool climate and the pretty lake scenery of Naini Tal, I was, in the height of the summer heat, transferred to the hottest station on the Bengal side of India, Allahabad, to command for a time the Division which has its head-quarters there. A bad outbreak of cholera in the station prevented me taking my leave of absence in July, and thus I had, for my last year in India, an unusually long spell of very hot weather; but it did me no harm, and I was able to remain to the last in good and strong health. I availed myself of my leave of absence in September, and went to Kharwara, in Rajputana, to visit my friend, Colonel Arthur Conolly, who had succeeded to the command of the Mewar Bhil regiment there. He and I went to Udaipur as guests of the political Resident,

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Colonel Charles Euan Smith,[1] and while there we were witnesses of a most remarkable scene that took place in the verandah of the Residency, when a report was made of a recent human sacrifice in the neighbourhood.

Briefly told, the story was that a Brahman village, belonging to the Udaipur state, had passed some time before into the possession of the adjoining Tonk state, by an interchange of detached villages, with a view to simplifying boundary matters, and thus the Brahmans found themselves with a Mahomedan over-lord instead of a Hindu one. The village had been granted in perpetuity to the Brahmans by a former Maharana of Udaipur, and the fact was duly recorded on a copper tablet, which is the form of title-deed in those parts. The grant, of course, was a religious one, after the manner of Church grants, but a nominal fee of Rs.12 was paid annually to the State for protection. After passing into the possession of the Mahomedan state, Tonk, the new authorities demanded payment of the regular land revenues, and from time to time an assessment upon the crops was made, which at last amounted to Rs.500 annually. Successive deputations of the villagers proceeded for four years to Tonk to lay their case before the Durbar (Court) there, but without effect. The Copper Deed was shown, but their petition was rejected. A few weeks previously, upon the ripening of the rain crops, the usual tax collectors came to assess the village, and it soon became known to the Brahmans that there was absolutely no hope of any remission of their burden. Some differences had arisen between the revenue assessors and the villagers, and the feelings of the latter were evidently strained to the highest pitch of despair, for on the morning that the measurement of the crops commenced the Brahmans assembled, and it was decided by all present—women

[1] Colonel Sir Charles Euan Smith, K.C.B., C.S.I.

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as well as men—that there was nothing left for them to do to move the Durbar, except the awful sacrifice of life, known as *Johur*. The object of *Johur* is best illustrated by the scriptural quotation: "It is good that one should die for the people." Three men and four women presented themselves to be burnt as *willing* sacrifices; but the women would not hear of any man dying, and it was decided that the sacrifice should be confined to the four women. The wood and flax were collected and the pyre prepared immediately this resolution was taken, and the victims had selected themselves for death. At the last moment two of the women became frightened and withdrew, no opposition whatever being offered. The other two went bravely to their death. Just as the flames commenced to envelop them they exhibited the most extraordinary courage, for, addressing the bystanders, they asked them to call their sons to cut off their hands before they were consumed, and to send them to the proper tribunals as proofs of the occurrence, for otherwise, they said, it might be believed that their ashes were not mingled with those of the burnt wood. The sons, who were present, at once stepped forward, the hands were held out, and three were cut off. A few minutes later the women were sacrificed. All this happened about mid-day, and in the space of two hours. The revenue officials of Tonk were engaged in measuring the crops at the time, and on hearing of the preparations for the *Johur*, they fled.

The villagers presented themselves at Udaipur, bringing the charred hands with them in conformity with the wishes of the unfortunate victims. They came to the Residency to supplicate the Supreme Government, which to them represented something mysterious but all-powerful, to ensure a revival of their old privileges. They were accompanied by some of the Maharana's officials, and on a sign they

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uncovered the poor charred hands, and reverently laid them on a piece of cloth on the ground before us. We felt deep sympathy with them in their distress, and the Maharana's officials declared that the utmost would be done to remedy the wrong which had driven them to this dreadful act of despair. I wrote an account of this at the time, which appeared in the *Pioneer*, my object being to draw such attention to it, that it should not be dealt with as a crime, and, moreover, to stimulate the native governments concerned in their expressed good intentions.

The following day the Maharana's officials, with the object probably of diverting our minds from the terribly sad story of the Brahman village, mentioned that His Highness had at that time as an honoured guest at his court, a Brahman from Benares who had the most wonderful memory ever known to them, and it was proposed that he should give us an exhibition of his powers. A visit to the Residency was arranged, and other English gentlemen then in Udaipur, and some Rajput gentlemen of the place, were invited to be present. The Brahman, known as Galtu Lal, Maharaj, came, accompanied by a friend. He was of medium height, spare in body and ascetic in appearance, with a quiet look of self-possession and quick apprehension. It was arranged that ten of us, five European, five native gentlemen, should each write out a sentence of five to ten words in the following languages and dialects—Greek, Latin, French, English, Scots (Burns), Sanscrit, Persian, Urdu, Guzerati, and Bhil. Each word was numbered, and Galtu Lal began by asking each of us the name of the language, the number of words in the sentence, and to speak the sentence slowly. His next step was to ask each person for any word he chose of his sentence, and its number: this word he repeated till he got the pronunciation as near as possible. In this manner he proceeded with his

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enquiries, telling each person as he passed on to the next how many words there were left to complete his sentence.

When about half-way through the exercise he invited us to question him on any subject, with the view of distracting his mind from what had just engaged it; among other things he was asked his opinion regarding the spirits of the dead having knowledge of what was passing in this world, and he said that no doubt the spirits of certain chosen ones were privileged to know what would give them pleasure. Regarding the moon being inhabited, he thought that as the varied features of its surface appeared to indicate the existence of land and water, it was reasonable to suppose that it resembled our earth, and might contain human beings and animal life. After this he proceeded with the exercise of memory; as each sentence was completed, he named the language, repeated the words in their regular order according to numbers, and also gave them in the order in which they were first chosen. In no instance did he make a mistake, and the pronunciation was remarkably good. Thoroughly pleased with his success, he proceeded to further proof of memory. He said: "Give me the language and the number and I will tell you the word." This was done quickly and accurately. He then added: "Give me the word and the language and I will give you the number; or give me the word and I will tell you the language." He was invariably correct. We conversed in Hindustani, a language which we all knew well.

Being asked the next day to witness a combat between a tiger and a wild boar, we went to the Maharana's menagerie grounds outside the city, where the preparations had been made. A great cage, firm and secure in every way, was placed against a long building with trap-doors leading into it from the divisions which held the animals. The boar was first

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turned in—a fine savage-looking animal, active, alert, and bristling with angry suspicion; he walked about the cage in a restless manner, scenting danger, and when the tiger was let in he retreated into a corner, and stood on his guard. The tiger was a full-grown beast, and had purposely been kept on short allowance of food so as to stimulate his hunger and provoke his ferocity, but the sight of the boar had the very evident effect of fear, causing him to retreat into the furthest corner, where he crouched and watched. The two looked at one another for some minutes, and then the boar walked out and stood in the middle of the cage, evidently challenging the tiger to fight, which, however, he declined to do, trying, on the contrary, to sink lower to the ground, and to press closer to the bars of the cage, clearly showing a strong desire to avoid contact. All attempts to rouse the tiger having failed, the trap-door was raised and he swiftly fled. This in a way confirmed what I had heard from native hunters of the full-grown wild boar being sometimes more than a match for the tiger, when not taken unawares. One of them told me that he and others had found the remains of a tiger and a boar which had evidently fought to the death, the signs showing the tiger to have died first, the boar going away some distance before he fell to his deadly hurts. They thought the tiger had attacked the "sounder" party of pigs which the boar was with, and that he struck first in defence of his family.

À propos of this discomfiture of the flesh-devouring tiger by the vegetarian boar, I lately saw in the papers a police report, in which a burglar, being interrupted in his operations, escaped from the house he had entered, but was pursued and captured by the occupant. After disposing of the case, the magistrate complimented the householder on his bold capture single-handed, whereupon, becoming garrulous, he told

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the court that while strong and active, yet he was a vegetarian. On hearing this the powerful burglar turned on him with a look of disgust at having allowed himself to be taken by him, and said: "Had 'a known that, a'd ha' knocked your —— head off." Such is the popular belief in beef!

From Udaipur I went to Kharwara, as Conolly's guest, to see my old regiment, the Mewar Bhil corps, which I had left nine years before. At the festivities and sports in honour of my visit the Bhil women and girls were in great evidence, and a race for them brought some fine specimens of slim, trim, good runners to the starting-post. There was great enthusiasm shown in this race, the women in their eagerness to win clutching at their rivals when they bunched together and tearing their scanty coverings to a condition which caused much merriment. There was such difficulty in deciding this race, for all with one voice claimed to be first, that in the end it had to be regarded as a case of all prizes and no blanks, each getting a small payment.

I visited an old friend in the neighbourhood, His Highness the Maharawal of Dungurpur, a chief of long pedigree, coeval with Udaipur, who has many Bhil subjects, and whose strong attitude on our side during the Bhil rising of 1881, which I have before mentioned, helped materially to put it down. He had pitched a most comfortable camp for us by the side of the lovely lake at his capital, and everything was done in excellent style. We sat down to a capital dinner, at which our Rajput host made the champagne flow freely. There was a fine firework display over the lake after dinner, followed by Bhil sports and dances, the active Bhil women taking a prominent part. The Maharawal at the end handed round rupees among them very liberally. He seemed to be on the best of terms with them all, and when I remarked on this

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to him, he said: "Sometimes I beat them, sometimes I caress them—all depends on their behaviour." He showed us his new "water palace," a very beautiful building with fine stone carvings, proving that the fine old Indian art still lives. A mason of Dungurpur was the architect, and his work pronounced him a true artist.

Lakelets, or large tanks, are numerous in Mewar and Dungurpur, and these add greatly to the beauty of the scenery. They are the signs of a somewhat bygone civilisation, when much value was placed on storage of the rainfall for an irrigation system which is not so carefully attended to now. Some of the lakes are of considerable size, and they are all formed in the same manner, by damming up the end of a deep broad valley. The Debar Lake near Kharwara, thus made, is said to be one of the largest artificial lakes in the world, being in the rainy season about 50 miles in circumference. The dam is 80 feet deep at the inner side, and 120 feet high at the outer, with a very great breadth between the walls. Public works of this kind were in those times meritorious and religious in their character, and they are generally regarded as blessed by Vishnu, the preserving deity. The labour expended on them was unpaid, food, however, being given free. At Debar the masons, as representing the skilled labour, were given the privilege of inscribing their names on the dam, which accordingly is covered on its broad face and pavement top with blocks of rough marble, bearing a vast number of names cut in the Hindi character. The engineering was so well done that the dam, closing in this extensive sheet of water, is only 120 yards long, and the overflow is sent out 12 miles off. We visited this lake on our way back to Udaipur, and rowed up the middle to have a good view of its great size and beautiful wooded hill-surroundings. Some fine mahseer, the Indian salmon,

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caught in the lake outlet by Bhils, were brought to our camp, which was pitched at the dam, and we soon discovered that the Bhils are as good fishermen as they are hunters.

The next morning these Bhil fishermen showed us some sport on the Teri stream which flows from the lake. Using the casting net, they took a mahseer of about 10 lbs. after various trials, and then they proceeded to the exciting sport of spearing with a light harpoon, having a barbed point with a metal socket fitting a bamboo shaft, and connected with it by a long length of strong line lapped round the shaft so as to run off easily when the fish is struck, and the harpoon holds. A number of men and boys swam into a pool known to contain big fish, and by diving and causing disturbance of the water right down to the bottom, drove the fish towards the harpooners, who were posted on commanding positions at certain shallow runs: and nets having been stretched across the shallows between the pools, the fish were there checked, and in swimming back, again offered a mark for the harpoon. I saw a mahseer, thus struck, dart straight up the side of a shallow run, where the water was so low that his dorsal fin showed right out of it, and reach the deep pool he had left, the lapped line spinning off the thrown shaft, which was dragged to the pool a few yards up, and there made to dance on it, sometimes being taken under, then reappearing on the surface, and floating quietly while the fish rested a bit, again to be jerked hither and thither, and even to be thrown up vertically as it was pulled down suddenly and violently. At last the struggles ceased, and the harpooner, swimming towards the shaft, took the line, played the tired fish a little, and then landed a fine 12-lb. mahseer.

The harpoon arrow is used in the dry and hot season, when the streams consist of pools of clear

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water at distant intervals, with often no surface flow between them, but connected by copious percolation through sand and gravel. The big "murrel" are generally the fish that fall to the harpoon arrow; for it is their habit to rise slowly to the surface from time to time, before going down again into the depths. The fisherman, perched on a rock or steep bank over a pool, perfectly motionless like the king-fisher bird, with the harpoon arrow fitted to his bow-string ready for instant use, watches for the fish to rise. When struck, it dashes to the bottom, carrying with it the barbed arrow head, from the socket of which the shaft is jerked and lies floating on the water. A fine line, made from the wild silk cocoon (which is plentiful in the jungles around), is attached to the arrow head and connects with the shaft, round which it is lapped to a considerable length, so as to run off easily when pulled, and allow plenty of play to the fish. When it is seen that the fish is tired out and lies quiet, the fisherman enters the pool, and taking the line, is able to land the fish if lying at the open bottom, but if under a stone or in a rock cleft, he dives and lays hold of it. One of the Bhils told us of the death of his brother the previous year when so engaged fishing. He dived to find the fish lodged in a narrow jagged cleft, and forcing his hand in was unable to withdraw it before the suffocation of drowning overtook him; and thus held, he lay dead in the pool. He had been fishing alone, and his long absence being noticed, a search was made, resulting in his bow being found on the bank, and the arrow seen floating on the water. A companion of his dived and found the poor fellow at the bottom, held as described. The hand and arm had been so twisted and fixed that help was required to free the body by force.

Promotion to the substantive rank of Major-General

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brought my Brigadier-General's command to an end; and thus, on 4th February 1887, I finished my service in India.

I became Lieutenant-General in December 1890, and General in April 1894.

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CHAPTER IX

(1888-1890)

I SHALL now introduce a short sketch of my twin brother's successful Army career, commencing from 1857, when his regiment, H.M.'s 29th, then in Burma, was moved to Calcutta, to strengthen the garrison there. Being qualified as interpreter in Hindustani, his services were made available for H.M.'s 97th Regiment, on its arrival with the reinforcements from England. This gave him the opportunity to take part in the campaign then being undertaken for the recovery of British supremacy in India, as the 97th joined a force which fought its way through Southern Oudh, and was engaged at the siege and capture of Lucknow.

We met in June 1858, when I was with my detachment of the 7th Punjab Infantry near Cawnpur, and he on his way to Simla, on short leave of absence. Later that year he was appointed Staff Officer to a column under the command of Colonel W. Turner (97th),[1] which held the line of the Grand Trunk Road near Benares, and was engaged in the operations against the energetic rebel leader, Koer Singh, including the capture of Jugdespur, and other successful affairs. For that service his name was noted for the brevet of Major, which he obtained after his promotion to Captain. He exchanged in 1860 to the 46th, which was then in Bengal, and in consideration of his Staff services in the field, his

[1] The late Brigadier-General Sir William Turner, C.B., K.C.S.I.

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name was noted for appointment to the permanent Army Staff. At the same time I was doing my very utmost to be reappointed to the Punjab infantry, urging as a strong claim my late field service with the 7th Regiment (renumbered 19th). And here Dame Fortune stepped in to decide what was best for us. She regarded us as interchangeable, adaptable twins, and arranged in some mysterious manner that my brother should be appointed Commandant of the 29th Punjab Infantry, while I was sent to the Army Staff; and the arrangement worked out well. My brother made his regiment a first-rate fighting one, and gave it the high reputation which it still bears. He commanded it in the Jowaki expedition on the Punjab frontier, 1877-78, for which he was mentioned in despatches. The regiment again, under his command, rendered signal service with the Kuram Field Force under General Sir Frederick Roberts, 1878-79, and was engaged at the assault and capture of the Afghan strong position on the Peiwar Kotal. Later, he commanded it in the Zaimusht and Waziri expeditions. For these services he was mentioned in despatches, and made C.B.

He became Brigadier-General in command of the Kuram Brigade, and afterwards commanded the 2nd Brigade in the Mahsud-Waziri expedition of 1881, for which he was mentioned in despatches, and thanked by the Government of India. He was appointed Brigadier-General on the fixed establishment of general officers in 1882, and was posted to the Multan Brigade. He was transferred to the Rawal Pindi Brigade in 1884, and to the superior command of the eastern district (Assam) in 1885. This gave him another opportunity of special service, when he commanded the operations from that frontier district in the Burma war of 1886-87, for which he was mentioned in despatches, and again received the

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thanks of the Government of India. He was appointed K.C.B. in 1898.

He left India about the same time as I did, in 1887, and in 1890 was appointed Assistant Military Secretary for Indian Affairs to H.R.H. The Duke of Cambridge, Commander-in-Chief; and after six years of admirable work in that post, he was nominated Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, a position for which he was well fitted by a long career of distinguished service.

The striking personal likeness between my brother and myself, which I have mentioned in the beginning of this Memoir, has continued through life, and in consequence, many mistakes, some of them very amusing and quite after the manner of the "Comedy of Errors," have occurred. The following are a few of them.

In 1860 I was on a visit to my brother, then Captain in the 29th, and on detachment at Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was "Kit inspection" day for his company, and on going to the barrack where the kits were laid out, he sent the colour-serjeant to his room in the officers' quarters for some papers which he had left on the table there. I was in the room and at the table when the serjeant came in, and seeing his captain there, as he thought, he stood amazed, and in dumb fear of something supernatural, for he regarded me as a ghost. I imagined he had come to report that the kits were ready for inspection, and had missed meeting my brother, so I told him that he had gone a few minutes before: my voice was the same as my brother's, and this, while still mystifying him, yet had some reassuring effect, for in a hushed tone he said he had come for the papers, and taking them up, he walked away softly. He learnt from some one as he left the officers' quarters of the "twin-captain," and then understood that he

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had not seen an apparition. He joined my brother at the inspection, and when the duty was over, told him of the "awful turn" he had when he entered his room.

In 1881 I was laid up with illness in Simla, and was kindly attended by the Staff surgeon attached to Army Head-quarters: he had just left me one morning confined to my bed, when, on riding away from my house, he met me (as he thought) cantering up to it on my well-known Kalmaki pony, and saw that I passed quickly without noticing him. He was immensely puzzled until he met some one immediately after, from whom he heard that the rider of my pony was my twin brother, who had lately come to Simla. He told me next morning of his momentary amazement at the vision of myself on the pony, which he recognised, riding up to the house where he had just left me ill in bed.

I had sat down to lunch in the United Service Club, Pall Mall, and was engaged in the full satisfaction of a good appetite, when one of my brother's friends, who was sitting near, came to me and said: "You are a strange fellow. I have just seen you finish a capital lunch, pay for it, and leave; and immediately after you come back, forget you have had lunch, order another, and begin again." I first said it was a way I had, and then explained that I had met my brother in the hall leaving the Club as I entered.

A mutual friend, a lady, meeting me after my marriage, and mistaking me for my brother, said: "So Tom is married? And is his wife nice? I do hope he is happy." It would have caused awkward confusion to explain the mistake, so I merely replied "Oh yes! She is very nice, and he is very happy," and made an excuse to hurry away.

Another mutual friend, a gentleman in this instance,

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happening to fall in with me about the same time, linked his arm in mine as we walked along, and said in a confidential manner: "Tell me, like a good fellow, about your brother Tom's marriage—has it turned out well? I used to know the lady, and——" He was on the point of pouring out further remarks when I interrupted him with: "I can assure you it is a great success: I know this well, for *I am the other fellow*, and not the one you think." He was speechless with astonishment for a moment or two, and then we both had a good laugh at the mistake.

On my return from Persia in 1891 I attended the first of the Commander-in-Chief's *levées* that season, and on entering the room, His Royal Highness at once began to refer to a conversation of the previous day (with my brother, then Assistant Military Secretary) and a letter he had that morning received from India. I tried twice to explain who I was, but without success, and finding it difficult to interrupt His Royal Highness again, the very short time which is necessarily fixed for an ordinary *levée* interview passed, and I retired without the mistake being made known. I met General Sir Donald Stewart outside, and told him what had happened, on which he said he was to dine with the Duke that night, and would mention it to him. I heard from him afterwards that His Royal Highness had discovered the mistake immediately the next officer entered. He had thought that my brother, from a punctilious notion of duty, had attended the first *levée*, and on his leaving, he looked in the list for the next name, and saw mine as "Military Attaché, Tehran." He therefore, on seeing some one else enter, at once understood that he had mistaken the Military Attaché for his Secretary.

The following, yet another instance of mistaken identity, is too good to be omitted. My brother was gazetted K.C.B. in the Queen's Birthday Gazette of

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21st May 1898, and I happened to attend the *Levée* at St James' two days later. After being presented to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, I received congratulations on the honour of K.C.B. from some members of the Royal Family. I could not stop to explain; it would have been unpardonable of me to do so on such an occasion, and, moreover, it would have shown a great want of tact, for the remarkable Royal memory seldom goes wrong. Accordingly, I carried away the congratulations meant for my brother, and conveyed them to him.

Nothing particular concerning myself happened till October 1888, when I was asked by General Sir Donald Stewart if I would be inclined to accept an offer of the Governorship of the Imperial British East Africa Company, with head-quarters at Mombasa. This was a most tempting offer, but I felt bound to refuse it, as I understood that I would have to reside at Mombasa on the coast, a place in 5° south latitude, reeking with damp, and I knew from my experience of Bombay, and Port Louis, Mauritius, that continued moist heat was dead against health and energy with me. Dry heat I could bear, and keep well in it, too, to any extent; so I told Sir Donald that had the Company also undertaken operations in Suakin and the Sudan, where the climate is hot and dry, I would have been delighted to accept a post there; or if I could look to being much in the dry climate of the Masai country, 80 miles up from the coast, I would have liked to give myself a trial in the post. But I saw that it was necessary to carry on the administration from Mombasa, and I regretted to feel obliged, in justice to the Company and myself, to decline acceptance. I continued in favour with Fortune, however, notwithstanding this refusal on my part of a good offer, for in July 1889 I was informed through my friend, Colonel Sir

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Edward Bradford,[1] late Secretary in the Political Department, India Office, who was then Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, that Sir Philip Currie,[2] Under Secretary in the Foreign Office, would be glad to see me regarding special service with Her Majesty's Legation at Tehran. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff,[3] Her Majesty's Minister at the Court of Persia, was then in London in connection with the Shah's visit to England, and I talked the matter of my appointment, as Military Attaché and Oriental Secretary to the Legation, over with him, Sir Alfred Lyall (then on the Council of the Secretary of State for India), and Sir Philip Currie; and finally it was arranged that my appointment would be proposed to Lord Salisbury. Eventually, the Queen's sanction was obtained, and I was directed to proceed to Tehran in the end of the year, to arrive there shortly after the Minister.

I travelled *viâ* Constantinople, Batoum, and Tiflis, staying a week at the "Hotel d'Angleterre," in Constantinople, where I was made an honorary member of the Constantinople Club, a most English looking place. I made the acquaintance of Sir William White,[4] the British Ambassador, and other celebrities, and also picked up an agreeable and clever travelling companion in M. Knobel, on his way to Tehran to establish the Dutch Legation there. He had come straight from St Petersburg, where he had been for some years, and had gained an excellent knowledge of the Russian language, so there was mutual advantage in our arrangement that he should be interpreter while we travelled in the Caucasus, and I

[1] Colonel Sir Edward R. C. Bradford, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.S.I.

[2] The Right Hon. Lord Currie, P.C., G.C.B.

[3] The Right Hon. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

[4] The late Right Hon. Sir William White, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

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should act in a similar capacity in Persia. We voyaged to Batoum in an Austrian Lloyd's steamer, taking four days on the passage, and passed on at once to Tiflis. The winter of 1889-90 was exceptionally severe, and we found the whole country more or less under snow. I was agreeably surprised with the comforts and conveniences of life and travel which I found in the Caucasus, and my astonishment was great to see electric light everywhere, even on board the Caspian steamers. The voyage from Baku to Resht, the Caspian port for Tehran, was most enjoyable, as the sea was like a mirror, in which the snow-covered mountain and coast scenery were reflected as in a calm Scottish lake. We found deep snow at Resht, an unusual sight on the low coast there (80 feet below ocean level), and had a very rough, cold journey the whole way to Tehran (200 miles). The great depth of snow on the direct road over the Kharzan pass obliged us to follow the lengthened lower route along which the Russian carriage road was afterwards constructed. It is an easy journey now from Resht to Tehran by this new carriage road, which practically takes Russia to the gates of the capital and the Shah's palace. I was met, on arrival at Resht, by a Legation courier, with a very kind letter of welcome from Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, inviting me to be his guest. I would here say that I enjoyed Sir Henry's splendid hospitality from first to last while he was Minister, and that we were always on the most delightful terms of friendship and *camaraderie*.

I found my new duties with the Legation most interesting, and I took most kindly and quickly to all my surroundings. Sir Henry, in introducing me to the Shah (Nasr-ed-Din), mentioned that I was in the confidence of both the British and Indian Governments, and this, with my knowledge of the Persian language and varied Oriental experiences, enabled me to make a

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favourable start in quickly becoming acquainted with the ministers and prominent individuals at the Court and the capital. Socially, I found the Persian people a great improvement on the other Orientals of the further East whom I had met. They are of a happy disposition and bright imagination, doubtless produced by the dry clear air of their high table-land, which relieves from dulness and depression. They enjoy a joke and laugh heartily, and they are able to see that most things have their amusing side. I was struck with much among all classes which showed that their manners and ways had been favourably touched and turned by a softening civilisation of ancient date.

There was much diplomatic activity in most of the Legations at Tehran that winter, and "unofficially" supported concessionaires and syndicate agents were tempting the Shah and his ministers with proposals regarding roads, railways, and also monopolies connected with tobacco and opium. Hospitality, as an aid and stimulant, was not less active than diplomacy, and they ran together very merrily at dinners and dances. But nothing of profit to the countries concerned came out of all the talk: the tobacco concession had a very short existence after it became the property of a corporation, and prospective railways were destroyed by an agreement between Persia and Russia to block all such enterprises for a considerable term of years. An account of the manner in which this was done appeared in an article on "The Middle East" in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* of March 1900, and in connection with what is there stated the following may be mentioned. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had found his opportunity with the Shah in the beginning of 1889, when the Russian Minister, Prince Dolgorouki, left Tehran, and some time passed before a successor was appointed. The late Shah was generally disinclined to pay serious attention to a "Chargé d'Affaires," and as Sir Henry's

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PRINCE OVEYS, MOTAMED-ED-DOWLEH, FORMERLY GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF FARS, AND HIS SON, MAHOMED ALI MIRZA.

Sevraguine photo.] [*To face page* 244.

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high reputation as a diplomatist had preceded him, Nasr-ed-Din gave ear to him regarding the opening of the Karun river in the south to the navigation of the world, while he ignored the Russian objections to this step.

It so happened that a clever successor to Dolgorouki, M. de Butzow, arrived at Tehran in July 1890, and Sir Henry became very ill in September, and remained so until his departure for England in November. The Russian Minister took the fullest advantage of this opportunity, and succeeded in getting the Shah's approval of a draft agreement between the two countries to shut out railways for ten years from that time. Owing to Sir Henry's serious illness the Legation was detained for some time in the summer quarters at Gulhak after all the Legations and the Persian Government had returned to Tehran for the winter, and thus the machinery for obtaining information was to some extent thrown out of gear. We were accordingly rather late in discovering that the formal contradiction of negotiations being in progress for this Russo-Persian agreement was not true, and when the First Secretary and I had an interview with the Grand Vazir concerning it, we ascertained that the matter had gone almost too far for warnings to have any effect. The Vazir argued that the wording of the clause in the agreement regarding railway projects, to be considered by the two parties at the end of the period fixed, permitted of Persia being advised then, and he implied that this included English advice, which would naturally protect English interests. From this he went on to say that a railway to the south of Persia could not possibly be allowed without the consent of England, and that therefore the Shah's existing promise to that effect would continue to have effect. We asked that this promise should be fully stated in the agreement, but it was hardly to be expected that the Russian Minister, the astute

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M. de Butzow, would consent, and accordingly it found no place in that document. In the course of this conversation I remarked to the Prime Minister that Russia was seeking to reduce Persia to the condition of the Khanate of Bokhara, by asking for such a sign of surrender of her sovereign rights as this agreement signified. On our Foreign Office being informed of all this, we were instructed to submit an important communication to the Shah, which concluded with the statement that in event of the agreement being ratified, England reserved to herself the right to protect her own interests. We accordingly again saw the Grand Vazir, and requested the favour of an interview with the Shah.

The interview took place the following day, and His Majesty said he was surprised to hear that the British Government took such a serious view of a matter which he had not regarded as of great importance. His Majesty, moreover, said that he had understood from his Prime Minister that we also had not regarded it so seriously at first, on which Mr Kennedy (First Secretary) asked me to repeat, among other things, what I had specially said regarding a comparison with the Khanate of Bokhara. I knew how extremely sensitive the Shah was on this particular point, and I therefore prefaced my statement by expressing the hope that His Majesty would pardon my boldness, and then repeated the conversation. He always wore glasses at interviews, and when I had finished speaking, he pushed them up to his lambskin cap so as to uncover his eyes with an angry gesture, and looked sternly at me for a few moments, and then, recovering his composure, said very quietly that he had accepted the draft, and therefore the agreement was made, but that it could never result in anything unfavourable to British interests in the south of Persia. The Shah had always from the first regarded me in a friendly manner, and he

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showed at the close of the interview that this feeling on his part had not changed, for, on being informed that I was about to leave on temporary duty to India, he said he hoped I would return to the Legation.

À propos of autocratic sovereigns receiving frankness well, the following incident regarding the late Czar, of which I have some personal knowledge, is worth repeating. His Majesty was playing whist (out of his own dominions) with an English Royalty as partner, and one of his equerries with a Scottish gentleman as opponents. His Majesty held a good hand, and towards the end of it said: "We have the game, four by honours and the odd trick." The Scot said: "Please, Your Majesty, let us play the hand out," and when that was done he added: "Your Majesty made a revoke." The Equerry looked aghast at the boldness, and the Czar said: "I have never made a revoke in my life." The Scot replied: "Perhaps Your Majesty was never told," and proceeded to turn over the tricks, and show the revoke. The Equerry was more aghast than ever, and the English Royalty smilingly said: "Pardon my friend's bluntness." The next day, the Czar, happening to meet the Scottish gentleman, said with a laugh: "I have been thinking over what you said yesterday about the revoke, and probably it is true that I never was told." The moral of this anecdote applies with much force at present to the Czar's ignorance of the real situation in Russia.

I have said that the Shah from the first had regarded me in a favourable manner. I think my name, being the same as that of the hero of Khartoum, attracted his notice, and I was also told by one whose position at Court gave him first-hand knowledge, that His Majesty was well pleased to see a military attaché at last appointed to the British Legation. My informant added that the appointment was the more acceptable as I held the rank of Major-General. Up to that time

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the only European military representatives at the Court of Persia were from Russia, forming what was known as the Russian Military Mission, and consisting of a colonel commandant and three captains. These officers, assisted by six experienced non-commissioned officers, had under them the Persian Cossack Brigade (paid by the Persian Government), composed of two regiments of cavalry and a battery of horse artillery.[1] In 1889 Sir H. Drummond Wolff, then His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, had strongly urged the advantage of the British army being represented at the Legation, and the post of military attaché was accordingly sanctioned. The Shah undoubtedly appreciated this step, and he took an early opportunity of showing it very pointedly at a gala review of ten thousand troops, which was held at Tehran on 31st May 1890, in honour of the Swedish special mission sent by King Oscar II. of Sweden and Norway to convey the high order of the Seraphim to His Imperial Majesty. Extraordinary efforts were made to assemble this comparatively large force of trained cavalry, artillery, and infantry, and the Cossack Brigade was a prominent feature of the parade. The Shah drove from the palace to the city gate leading towards the plain where the troops were drawn up, and there mounted his horse. Seeing me at the gate, he called me forward and said I was to ride by his side, and when his brother, the Naib-es-Sultaneh, who was Commander-in-Chief, came up to submit the parade state and take his orders, the Shah asked me to accompany his brother as principal aide-de-camp for the occasion. It was a very unusual proceeding, but I accepted the situation and took part in the march past. The incident was noticed, and there was an idea that the Shah, who had a good knowledge of Scandinavian affairs and the politics of

[1] This brigade still exists, and I understand that its strength in rank and file has lately been increased.

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the countries of North Europe, desired to show his distinguished Swedish visitors that Great Britain was equally interested with Russia in the welfare of Persia.

My relations with the Russian officers of the Persian Cossack corps were of the most friendly nature, and on the first occasion of the Brigade annual *fête* after my arrival at Tehran, I was invited to be present at the review and inspection by the Commander-in-Chief, and to partake of the lively lunch which followed. It was a very hot day in July, and the hospitality displayed in drinks was to me as warm as the weather. There was first the invariable "zakouska," the preliminary refreshment at a "buffet" laden with everything sufficient to satisfy any ordinary appetite and thirst, but which Russians take merely as a stimulant to further hearty eating and drinking. And the toasts that were given at the solid meal after, in rapid succession, were necessarily almost speechless, in the desire to drink repeatedly to the health of all and every one. All the foreign officers in the Shah's service—German, Austrian, French, and Italian—were present, and in the general conversation which sprang up, the subject of Gibraltar was started for my especial benefit by an ex-officer of the German army, who posed as being better informed than his neighbours. He stated that the place had been once retaken from the English, and it was entirely owing to mismanagement and disagreement among its captors that it again fell into English hands. It was evident that he laboured under a topsy-turvy recollection of what he had read as having occurred when the place fell originally into our possession. My reply that the repeated attempts made to recapture it from the English had invariably ended in failure was evidently regarded as a bit of British bluff, so the pointed question was pressed upon me—Had Gibraltar ever been taken from the

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English? My prompt answer, "Never," produced the challenge to back my opinion with a bet of ten gold "imperials," which I declined on the ground that I should be betting on a certainty; but this plea was not allowed, and I was pressed all the more to make the bet. The Russian artillery captain of the Cossack corps agreed with me as to the fact, but said that as the others seemed to think I should accept the challenged bet, it would be quite correct in me to consent. The talk ended in a small bet of one imperial. Two days afterwards, my argumentative German friend called on me to say he had lost the bet, and that it was lucky for him I had reduced it from ten imperials to one.

Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had arranged to go to India to consult with the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, concerning matters relating to India and Persia, but his serious illness prevented the journey. As I was to accompany him, I had been made fully informed of all the points which were to be discussed, and accordingly it was decided that I should proceed to Calcutta and represent his views. We both left Tehran the same day, 12th November 1890, Sir Henry for Resht on the Caspian, *en route* to England, and I for the Persian Gulf. Sir Henry left the following letter for me:—

"I cannot leave without saying how much I feel your exceeding kindness to me, not only during my illness, but during the whole time we have been diplomatic comrades. I really do not know what I could have done without your counsel and assistance, and words cannot represent the feeling of gratitude which I feel for your unwearied kindness during my sickness."

I had planned my journey by the proposed route from the capital to the lately opened Karun river-way, which promised to be the shortest and best line of communication between Tehran and the Persian

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Gulf. A scheme was then in progress for the construction of a cart road along that route, and further information was wanted concerning it. The route lay *viâ* Kum, Sultanabad, Burujird, Khoremabad, and the Luristan hills, to the Karun valley and Arabistan (Persian Arabia). I was joined at Kum, 100 miles from Tehran, by Mr Macqueen, a Civil Engineer employed by the Imperial Bank of Persia to develop the road concession which the Bank had acquired. I travelled with a well-appointed small camp, capable of moving rapidly over difficult country. The day after I left Tehran the whole of the mules carrying my camp and kit were captured by a party of well-armed mounted nomad robbers and driven off to the hills. They were all recovered the following morning, with only one load plundered. The recovery was due to identification of the horse ridden by the leader of the gang. All the migratory tribes breed horses, and such is the habit of observation of horses in the country that as a rule a man is known by his horse as in many parts of England a man is known by his dog. The robbers allowed me to pass unmolested, as their object was to plunder my baggage, which was far behind. Their leader rode up to my party, and while looking intently at me, dropped a short stick he was carrying; on dismounting to pick it up, the mare he rode wheeled round, and I noticed that she had lost her right eye. The road guards, themselves nomads, when hearing from me the description of the party we had met, and that one, who seemed to be the leader, was riding a blood-looking chestnut mare, blind of the right eye, at once said, "Oh! Kara Beg and his sons are in this," and rode off rapidly to follow the trail. This happened on the high road about 25 miles from Tehran, and the authorities there were so active in having Kara Beg hunted that he entirely disappeared. After this little adventure I

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pursued my journey, observing and noting what was useful to know, and nothing very unusual happened until I reached the Luristan hill country, inhabited by the turbulent Lur tribes, who are always more or less at war with the Persian Government.

As I approached Khoremabad I saw many black-tent camps of the Sagwand Lurs, on the annual migration to their winter pasture grounds in the west, on the banks of the Kerkha, and further on I met a regiment of Persian infantry, straggling as usual over several miles of road, with their useful little donkeys carrying, in addition to tents, bedding, and provisions, everything else that the soldier himself should carry. The commanding officer, who was far behind, told me that the troops had been sent out to collect the taxes, and I afterwards heard that the Lurs I had seen were caught with their herds, flocks, and families, and the Government demands not being satisfied, distress ensued. The custom was for the tax gatherers to wait till the migration of the tribes from the hills in winter, and back in summer, to collect the dues, as flight or fight was almost impossible then, and for this reason I feared that my journey along the migrating track might be stopped or delayed by the resentful nomads. The Zahir-ud-Dowleh, Governor of Khoremabad, had been in power only six weeks; his predecessor had allowed the Lurs to get out of hand, so that, in order to vindicate the ruling authority, he found himself called upon at once to act in a sternly severe manner, and he believed that the Dirikvend section of the tribe, whose hills I was about to traverse, having had a lesson in obedience, would give no trouble. He gave me an escort of ten irregular cavalry soldiers, and ordered the Dirikvend chief, Mir Haji Khan, to meet me at the first day's stage on entering the hills, and accompany me to the

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plains of Arabistan beyond. My start was a bad one, the escort of ten being represented by three only, who assured me, however, that the others would follow. They made their appearance in the evening, and I was then able to look them over critically. I was much pleased to see that they were excellently mounted, and well equipped with Werndl breech-loaders and full double bandoliers. They were of a rough, tough, good fighting type, and I felt confident that they were well worth the extra pay, with rations for themselves and their horses, which I promised them.

I was told that day that the Dirikvend Lurs were in a restless, suspicious mood, and therefore I was not surprised to hear that their chief had not obeyed the Governor's order to meet me. His nephew, Mir Namdar Khan, who was his rival in the tribe, came in his place three days later, and accompanied me part of the way to serve some purpose of his own. He and his men nearly brought off a fight with some other Lurs, on pretence of guarding my camp against an imaginary danger, and their mutual angry threats were only silenced by the practical preparations of my Khoremabad escort to have a hand in settling the quarrel in an impartial manner. I had with me one of the Legation couriers, a man of much experience and ready resource, and he suggested that we should attach ourselves to one of the tribal migrating camps, marching with them till clear of the hills, and thus escape the attentions of our volunteer guards. He arranged this with the most respectable party of the nomads under pretext of getting supplies of mutton and milk during the journey, payment, of course, being made on a liberal scale. This alliance worked most satisfactorily, and saw us safely over the greater portion of the road.

When we reached comparatively open country we said good-bye to our Lur friends, and passed on, to

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find, however, the next day, that we had been hasty in considering all danger past. We had halted for breakfast, and sent on the camp caravan with five of the escort, keeping five with ourselves: when we mounted to resume our journey, information was brought that a strong party of Lur horsemen had taken up a position on the road between us and the caravan, and intended to prevent us passing to rejoin it. We found this to be the case, and the Khoremabad horsemen at once galloped forward with us to place themselves ready to reply to the Lurs with their rifles. But at that moment a peacemaker appeared in the form of a moulla who had attached himself to my camp on leaving Khoremabad, for protection and other advantages on his journey through the inhospitable Lur country. He hurried up on his well-bred riding donkey, and offered his services to explain who we were, and to show that it would be folly to quarrel with us. Away he went patter, patter, over the stones on his knowing-looking moke, and, after a short palaver, came back accompanied by several of the Lur horsemen, who said, "We are friends, and the road is free to you." They stated that their tribe had a grievance against the Persian Government, and they had acted as they did under the belief that I was a "General" in the Persian service. They knew of such an officer who had been in their hills a few years before. I told them that under any circumstances they would have punished the whole tribe by their folly, as retribution would have hunted them on the winter low grounds in Arabistan, and made escape possible only by return to the snow-clad hills, there to suffer severely with their families and flocks from cold and hunger. They promised me to allow my Khoremabad escort to return unmolested, and I afterwards learnt that they kept their promise.

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We had heard that the road between Khoremabad and Dizful had been put in repair, the bad bits over the difficult passes cleared of boulders and made somewhat easy, caravanserais built, a telegraph line erected, and road guards established; but we found this to be wholly incorrect. Very little had been done to improve the old track: attempts to clear it were apparent here and there, but all had been done piecemeal, and without relation to any regular plan. The idea had been to establish the Government authority by means of a good road with caravanserais, military posts, and a properly equipped telegraph line, but few steps had been taken to carry it out effectually. I was in a position to inform the Minister of Telegraphs of the true state of affairs, and he took steps to put an end to the pretence of a telegraph service across the Luristan hills. We saw that this route could never be adopted for a commercial cart road, the ascents being too steep, and the descents too deep and difficult to allow of such a road being made except at very great cost; but we had favourable accounts of another route which turns the high ranges over which we passed, and this was fully examined by Mr Macqueen on his return journey, with good results. This latter is the line along which I hope a light railway may be made in the early future to connect the Karun water-way (or railway) with the rich inland districts of Burujird, Kirmanshah, and Hamadan. I should add that the Persian Government eventually decided that the road and telegraph line over the Luristan hills were not worth the large sums supposed to be spent on them, and ceased to sanction further efforts in that direction. There is now very effective telegraph communication between Tehran and Arabistan by means of a branch leading from the Indo-European main line near Shiraz, and a good hill road under British management connects with Isfahan.

We reached Dizful, an ancient town on the Diz

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affluent of the Karun, on the 7th December. Dizful claims to be the City of Daniel, and the Governor, Haji Hasan Khan, who came out to meet me, said in a tone of deep respect as we rode over the ancient bridge leading into it, "You are now entering the city of the prophet Daniel, honoured be his name." This shows that there yet lingers in the land a romantic reverence for the great Jewish names and Vazirs, famous in the days of Biblical and early Persian history. I left Dizful on the 10th December, and was met that day by Khoda Karm Khan, a relative of the Bakhtiari chief, Isfendiar Khan, who was posted on the road to Shuster with one hundred Bakhtiari horsemen, ready for service on the neighbouring Turkish border. He came towards me with his troop formed in line, both men and horses presenting a remarkably good appearance. I was also met by Naval Sartip (Commander) Ahmad Khan, of the screw steamer *Persepolis* (600 tons), then lying at Mohamrah, the only vessel of war at that time belonging to Persia. The Sartip and the Bakhtiaris conducted me to a very comfortable and well provided camp which had been prepared for my party.

The following day I reached Shuster, the "Shushan" of the Bible, where I was received by the Governor-General of Persian Arabia in the most hospitable manner. The river Karun was then in flood from recent heavy rain, and the ancient great bridge there (built A.D. 265-70), known as Valerian's, showed well over the wide waters. Several of its arches were carried away by an unusually high flood in 1885, and the attempts made to rebuild them in 1886 and 1888 failed. Want of energy in prosecuting the repairs when once begun appears to have wrecked the work on each occasion. The Governor-General has his residence in the fort, which stands high on a rocky position on the river-bank about 300 yards above the old

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A LUR TUFUNGCHI (MUSKETEER).

ARAB GIRL GOING TO THE WELL.

AT SHUSTER.

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bridge. The citadel had been greatly altered and improved as a place of residence, and the underground apartments (for use during the extreme daytime heat in summer), cut out of the solid rock down to the river-bed level, are very fine in their way. Within the outworks are the arsenal and barracks, with a parade ground sufficient for infantry drill purposes: all the buildings and quarters were in good order and well kept, and the arsenal was fully and carefully stocked with Werndl breech-loading rifles and ammunition. There was a good appearance of efficiency and discipline in the garrison of six companies of the Hamadan regiment, and an artillery detachment with two Austrian mountain guns.

Stored in the arsenal were three old big guns, bronze and brass: one a very long piece of heavy metal and small calibre, said to be of the Suffivan period, and quite two hundred and fifty years old; another, a really great gun, cast for Nadir Shah at Howizah, in Arabistan, which has always been noted for its metal workers, and at the present day is a busy place of manufacture of metal fittings for horse furniture; and I was told that the third gun was of Russian make, with a Russian inscription on it of the year 1828. I remarked to the Persian officers present that 1828 was the year of the Turkmanshahi treaty after the war with Russia, on which one of them boastingly said that the gun was one of the many taken by the Persians in that war, and that it, along with another now at Ahwaz, had been sent from Tehran in 1856 for the war with the English. The gun stood in a dark corner, and on close examination I found a Persian inscription on it as well as the Russian one, telling that it was presented on the occasion of the Treaty of Peace in 1828 by the Czar, Nicolas the First of Russia, to Abbas Mirza, son and heir apparent of Fateh Ali Shah, and Commander-in-Chief of the Persian army.

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The band of the Hamadan regiment was performing in the courtyard of the Governor-General's residence at Shuster during one of my visits, and casting my eye over the musicians, I was struck with the look of the bandmaster, who appeared to me to be more European than Persian. When I asked about him afterwards I was told that he was a Russian of German extraction, and a renegade Mahomedan, renamed Ali Islam; he had been about ten years in Persia, and spoke Persian fluently, and it was understood that he had fled from Odessa as a Nihilist suspect, or otherwise dangerous political character. He had busied himself much with mapping the country at the various places where he was employed, and making notes on many subjects. I had two opportunities of observing and talking with him: once when he accompanied the colonel commanding the Hamadan regiment, who came to call upon me, and again when I returned the colonel's call. I was told that he lived with this officer as "tutor and companion," and he reminded me in some way of the Effendi Zaman Beg whom I have previously mentioned. They appeared to be alike in repenting the error of their ways in Russia and labouring to render some service to their late masters with a view to pardon and return whence they had fled.

I shall not attempt any description of the ruins of the past, and the evidences of great public works of far-extending utility, built sixteen centuries before, which met my gaze and stirred my imagination at Shuster and Ahwaz, as this has already been well done by several very competent travellers in those regions. I shall confine my observations now to incidents of the journey and modern matters of interest which attracted my attention. The Karun, and its branch the Gargar, are navigated by steamers to within 12 and 6 miles respectively of Shuster. The *Shushan*, a stern-wheeler (Nile boat pattern) of 30 tons, plies on the former, and

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the *Susa*, a steel launch of 20 tons, plies on the latter. I believe it has now been found practicable to take the *Susa* to within 3 miles of Shuster. I dropped down the Gargar on an inflated skin-raft, and went on board the *Susa*, which on the run down stopped at Bund-i-Kir, the point of junction of three streams—the two already mentioned, and the Diz. At Bund-i-Kir a well-built serai, with telegraph office and guard-house, was being completed: from its roof I had a good view of the flat country all round, and of the dense jungles on the banks of the three streams. These thickets are said to be the haunts of large and small game, including the maneless lion, swamp deer, hog, and francolin partridge. The lion was described as of skulking habits, and unequal to the African animal in size and appearance.

I observed great patches of oil-smooth water floating down the surface of the Karun; these were oil-spreads from the petroleum springs near Shuster which always give a large overflow after heavy rain. There had been a heavy fall a few days before, followed by the usual flush into the river, which Captain Plant of the *Shushan* told me he had found at many places smelling strongly of petroleum. I reached Ahwaz on the 16th December, slept on board the small *Susa*, and landed the next morning. I was received by the Arab Sheikh of the village of Ahwaz, attended by a number of horsemen, and was also met by the mounted officers of the Faridan regiment of infantry, who conducted me to their camp, where, after tea and tobacco, the regiment marched past. The men were neatly dressed in grey, looked well cared for, and altogether made a good show. The Sartip (Colonel) of the corps, Haji Mustafa Khan, was a well-to-do landlord of Chadagan, an elevated and well-watered fertile tract in the Faridan district near Isfahan. He exercised Civil charge as well as military command at Ahwaz, and kept up good style, living in camp with his regiment. Common report credited him with hand-

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ing scrupulously to his men all he got from Government for them, which is rather unusual in Persia. Their well-fed appearance and general look of contentment seemed also to bear witness to their colonel's upright dealing. The men with their donkeys (almost every Persian soldier has a donkey) found remunerative employment in transporting cargo between the steamer landing-places below and above the Ahwaz rapids, and in the building work then going on.

Ahwaz at that time had the appearance of awakening from the long, long sleep of centuries—a sleep which began when the great dam burst, and its grand irrigation system, that gave life to an immense area of fertile country, was destroyed. The remains of the ancient city, its water-mills, and far-extending canals, tell of rich prosperity and commercial activity, with a teeming population, in those early days. All the way down from Shuster, the signs of this ancient prosperity may be seen in the dykes, water-courses, and banks of dried canals which intersect the country in every direction. It was hoped that the opening of the Karun to the navigation of the world would have been followed by some practical schemes for developing the great natural resources of its valley; but rivalry in the north stood in the way of further success in the south, and the first result of opening up the river to the commerce of all nations was an agreement between Russia and Persia to postpone railway communication in Persia for a considerable number of years. It is a question whether this so-called agreement could be held to be really binding on Persia if she had a progressive Government which insisted on opening up the country to commerce. A great authority on International Law has stated that "the injustice and mischief of admitting that nations have a right to use force for the express purpose of retarding and diminishing the prosperity of their inoffensive neighbours are too revolting to allow

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such a right to be inserted in the international code."

But while waiting for the restoration of the great dam at Ahwaz, a Persian company in 1890 began the construction of a horse-tramway, about 1¼ miles long, to facilitate the trans-shipment of steamer cargo which the "rapids" necessitated. This company, which is called the "Nasiri," also acquired possession of land there which in the future should prove to be of considerable value. They had at the time of my visit finished a commodious caravanserai with storage and shelter sheds, and a landing wharf. They also owned a small steamer, the *Nasiri*, plying on the Lower Karun, and running in connection with the *Susa* on the upper stream. The *Nasiri* was principally used as a tug, taking two Arab boats of about 27 tons each lashed alongside her. It was then being arranged to transfer this steamer to the upper stream, the *Karun* of 60 tons taking her place below, and a second vessel was being ordered to supplement the navigation service there. This trading company had secured the co-operation of Sheikh Mizal, the principal Arab chief in Persian Arabistan, who, though friendly at heart to the English, had opposed the development of trade in the Karun valley, being suspicious of a closer interest in him and his large possessions, which might follow on the country being opened up to commerce. He was exceedingly wealthy, both by inheritance of lands, flocks, and herds, and subsequent increase of material prosperity. He exercised great personal influence in Arabistan from the sea to Wais, above Ahwaz, and his partnership was an element of strength to the Nasiri Company. This combination produced a healthy competition in the river trade with Messrs. Lynch Brothers, who were then running the *Blosse Lynch*, a fine boat of 300 tons, on the Lower Karun, in connection with the *Shushan*, which I have

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already described, on the upper stream. Having voyaged on the Upper Karun in the Nasiri Company's boat, the *Susa*, I took passage in the *Blosse Lynch* to Mohamrah (100 miles), where I arrived in eleven hours from Ahwaz.

The great date-palm groves on the Lower Karun, near Mohamrah and the Shat-el-Arab, are a delight to the eye. The capabilities of the available lands there for date cultivation are great, and are sure to attract planters when facilities are afforded. The date supply keeps increasing year by year, and so does the demand: 60,000 tons were exported from Busrah in 1890 in ocean steamers and coasting craft. An acre of ground holds a hundred trees: they bear fruit at five years, and reach full fruition at seven. In a fairly good season a tree in full bearing gives an average profit of Rs.3, at which rate the acre would give a good return, say £20. While the trees are growing up, the ground, with the irrigation which the trees require, yields a crop of wheat, clover, or grass, and later can afford pasture, there being but little heavy shade thrown by the feathery palm foliage above. It was interesting to hear of one hundred and sixty varieties of the date-palm, said to be distinguishable by the native growers from difference or peculiarity in fruit or stone, leaf or stem. The Arabs pay close attention to conditions of climate, soil, and water, so as to cultivate the fruit to the best advantage. I have given the profit on date cultivation in rupees, as my informant spoke of it in that coin. This is explained by the fact that the Indian rupee is current all over Arabistan. It is taken and asked for in preference to Persian krans, which then were all of the old currency, and the Arabs gave as the reason for their preference, that a bad rupee is seldom seen, whereas they find many false coins among the krans.

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A MOUNTAIN PATH POSTMAN.

"A GLIMPSE BEHIND THE VEIL."

AT AHWAZ.

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I think there is a good agricultural future in store for the Karun valley. Its great fertility was turned to good account by the ancients, and the restoration of its old irrigation works, which is now contemplated, should abundantly repay the outlay. Its soil is capable of producing a wonderful variety of crops—wheat, barley, rice, maize, sugar-cane, sesame, cotton, tobacco, opium, and indigo—and I am glad to think that British enterprise may take part in the development of this naturally fertile province which, under good management, might become a little Egypt. I may add that the neighbouring oil-fields are likely to increase its wealth and prosperity. The petroleum springs near Shuster have been known for centuries. They occur in the lower or inner belt of the Zagros hill ranges, running north-west and south-east. Borings, recently made with modern appliances in the same belt near Kirmanshah in the north-west, are said to have been successful in proving the existence of abundant oil, and there are the same unmistakable signs in the neighbourhood of Shuster and Ram Hormuz, near Ahwaz, in the south-east. If springs of real commercial value are found there, pipe lines to conduct the oil by gravitation to the port of Mohamrah, accessible to vessels of 1,500 tons, could easily be laid. As for labour in those parts, liberal pay and good treatment will attract plenty of it.

Persian Arabistan is the winter resort of Bakhtiaris and Lurs, who move down to the pastures there with their flocks and herds when the snow and severe cold in their hills make life too uncomfortable for man and beast, and they are to be found living on friendly terms with the Arab tribes who reside and roam there all the year round. It was the force of the argument that their winter migration would be stopped, should my party be molested, which induced the Lurs to say to me, when they came to listen to reason, "The road is free to you." I was able to observe among this

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gathering of tribesmen in Arabistan a feeling of independence and desire for change, which only await a leading spirit to make them combine and take a strong part on the side that may suit them best.

The principal Arab chief in Persian Arabistan, Sheikh Mizal, hereditary Governor of Mohamrah, whom I have previously mentioned, exercised great influence on both the Persian and Turkish sides of the frontier. His fort residence at Failia, on the Shat-el-Arab, 3 miles above Mohamrah, was conveniently situated, with but a narrow creek between Persian and Turkish territory, so that at short notice he could find asylum on either side when necessary. He was the only powerful Arab chief left in Persian territory; all had been broken but him. Intrigues by rival relations, set up at the instance of the Government, and resulting in feuds and factions, had made an end of the others, both as to wealth and power; Sheikh Mizal alone remained with the appearance of strength, and his possessions untouched, notwithstanding long continued plotting against him. He had a well-armed 60-ton steam launch, in which, with a strong guard, he visited Mohamrah occasionally; but his deeply-rooted suspicions had never allowed him to trust himself inside the building there, known as Government House, and situated opposite the Persian barracks. Knowing this, and being anxious to see him, I offered to visit him at his fort, and he arranged to send horses for myself and two attendants. My path lay through fine date-palm groves almost all the way. I found him to be a man of handsome appearance and charming manner. He received me most hospitably, and delighted me with a show of his stable of Arab horses of the very best blood. He returned my call the next day at the Persian Government House on the river-bank, where I was accommodated and hospitably entertained during my stay by his people. He told

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me that it was the first time he had ever been in that House, and it was evident that his bodyguard were very much on the alert. These were all African negroes of the blackest skin and curliest hair; men of fine physique, all carrying breech-loaders, and watching closely every movement about them, ready to act promptly on their master's sign. They looked like black curly retriever dogs eagerly watching their master's eye and hand. The Sheikh came in his armed steam launch, while a well-mounted body of armed retainers rode over from his fort to meet him at the landing-places. But all these precautions failed to save him from death by violence about six years later, when he and his young nephew were shot as they landed from a small boat at Failia, by some men who were concealed on the Turkish side of the creek. The crime is supposed to have been planned by his elder brother, Khizal, whom the father had set aside in the succession to himself, preferring (as in the case of Esau and Jacob) his younger son, Mizal, who was duly appointed heir, and eventually recognised as ruler in his father's place. But the elder brother never ceased to plan and plot his younger brother's ruin or death. Latterly he resided at Baghdad, from which place he was able to carry on his intrigues so successfully that, on his brother's death, he succeeded to his place, power, and property. The murderers were never discovered; probably they were well protected, and doubtless they were well rewarded. Doubtless also the "death duties" paid on each side of the border at Failia were very heavy, as there must have been many to conciliate and satisfy.

I arrived in Arabistan with five riding-horses, and on trying to sell them, previous to continuing my journey by river and sea, I found the prevailing idea that I should be obliged to part with them at any price much against me, and the best offer was literally little

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over the value of their clothing and shoes. I parted with two inferior ones, and sent the three good ones by land route to Mohamrah, where I arranged to ship them to Karachi, India, by the British India Steam Navigation Company's vessel, *Pemba*, engaging two Arab grooms, who were in the horse trade with India, to look after them on the voyage. They delivered the horses safely at Karachi, and their sale by auction there was successful in saving me from any loss. I was rather pleased at thus getting the better of the Arab horse dealers in their own country, where they thought they had me at their mercy.

From Mohamrah I went up the Shat-el-Arab, the united Tigris and Euphrates, to Busrah, and thence down to Bushire in the Persian Gulf by the s.s. *Pemba*, taking my Persian servants there, and sending them as comfortably as possible to Tehran by the post road. The Persian war vessel, *Persepolis*, being at Bushire when I arrived there, I went on board to call upon the officers and see the ship. There were four German officers with a crew of forty Arabs, natives of the Persian coast. The Arabs were neatly dressed as are European sailors in Eastern waters, and they looked active and alert seamen. Their clear, light-brown colour and ruddy complexions made them appear excellent imitations of bronzed British tars. The ship carried four 7·5 centimetre Krupp guns, with two "Gardner" machine guns of an old type. Everything on board was neatly arranged and well kept.

From Bushire I went on to India in Her Majesty's Gunboat *Sphynx*, calling on the way at various places on both sides of the Gulf, Arabian and Persian. At Linga, one of the Gulf ports belonging to Persia, I went ashore with the captain to visit the British Agent, who had come on board the gunboat immediately on her arrival. He was an Arab of grand figure and excellent manners, and his four tall sons were fine

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specimens of a manly race. This Arab trader-sailor was wealthy, and it was a great advantage to him to be under British protection, which his position as Agent afforded. He had in his temporary charge four negro youths, who had been rescued from an Arab craft in which they were found under most suspicious circumstances, pointing to an intention to sell them into slavery on the Persian coast. The poor creatures were produced for the captain to see, and it was pitiable in the extreme to witness their dumb terror. They huddled close together, and looked like hunted animals that had been caught when all possible chance of escape was gone. The Agent was treating them kindly till orders as to their disposal should be received from the Resident at Bushire.

From Linga the *Sphynx* went to Charja, on the opposite, the Arabian, coast, to make further enquiries concerning those from whom the negro boys had been rescued, and on arrival there, the Sheikh, who was also British Agent, was summoned on board to make his report. All was satisfactory so far as he was concerned, and he said through the interpreter (each vessel of war in the Gulf carries one) that he hoped a present would be given him to show to his people ashore that he had been favourably received on board. There was a lively swell on the sea at the time, and the small boat in which the Sheikh had come off danced up and down considerably, so that we were surprised to see this seafaring chief become suspiciously uneasy when he was sitting in the captain's state-room at the stern of the vessel. The interpreter said that the Sheikh was comfortable in a small boat, but not so in a big one, and that he might become unwell if he remained longer there. The captain expressed his sympathy, and said that the meeting was at an end. But the Sheikh said he was waiting for his present; the captain informed

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him there was none on this occasion, but he insisted, and begged for something to produce on going ashore. He was told that the vessels of war were not provided with presents to give, that this was reserved for the Bushire Resident to do, when he came in his vessel, the *Lawrence*, as he well knew, and he was bid a courteous farewell. But he would not go, and the situation was becoming critical by his visibly increasing discomfort from the sea motion. At last the Sheikh said it was absolutely necessary for the honour of his name among his people, and his peace of mind in his own house and family (meaning his wives, as the interpreter explained), that he should return with the pretence of a present, and he asked for a box packed with anything, and nailed down. This, he said, he could keep in his cellar, and no one need know its contents but himself, and thus his credit would be saved. The interpreter (himself, Arab) was as serious as the Sheikh over the whole affair. A small wine case, carefully packed with coal, was given him, and I added from myself a silver-mounted sword cane. I showed him what a good support (the cane being a stout one) it was as a walking-stick, and what a helpful companion it might be in time of danger. Armed with this, he went away contented with his coal box, and pleased, no doubt, with the justifiable deceit he meant to practise in his Harem, for, according to a tradition of the prophet Mahomed, falsehood is permitted in three cases—first, to a husband to content a wife; second, to a warrior, to escape from his foe; and third, to any one for the purpose of reconciling enemies. Hence the proverb—"All is fair in love and war."

It was a leisurely and most enjoyable voyage down the Gulf, and I had plenty of time and opportunity to see and hear much that was useful and interesting to know regarding the coast Arabs. The

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Arabs are one of the manliest races of the East, and those of the coast have long followed the calling of the sea. It is truly said of them that they were among the foremost of those in the "long ago" who went "down to the sea in ships and did business in great waters." They were well known as great traders abroad, and great pirates at home. From what I saw of them during this voyage, and of the Arab crew of the Persian gunboat *Persepolis* at Bushire, I formed the opinion that they are the "handy men" of the Indian Ocean, and are well fitted for our Naval service in the East.

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CHAPTER X

(1891-1892)

I HAD intended, after fulfilling the special purpose of my visit, to spend at least two months in India, where I had many welcomes awaiting me, but my pleasant plans were spoilt by a telegram which reached me at Jask, a Persian Gulf station of the Indo-European telegraph (sub-marine cable), to the effect that the Foreign Office desired to know when I expected to reach London. This was on 8th January 1891, and I replied, "Early in March," and had to rearrange my plans accordingly. I reached Calcutta on 23rd January, and was made a guest of the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne. His Imperial Highness the Czarewitch of Russia, then on a tour through India, arrived on the 26th, and I thus had the pleasure and privilege of meeting His Imperial Highness and being present at the festivities in his honour.

I had an interview with His Excellency the Viceroy on the 24th, the day after my arrival, at which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief (Sir Frederick Roberts) and the Military Member of Council (Sir George Chesney[1]) were present, when I submitted my papers with Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's instructions, and the subjects were discussed. I may say after this lapse of time, without fear of transgressing the rules of official secrecy, that one of these subjects was what is now known as the Seistan Railway, *i.e.*, a railway

[1] The late General Sir George T. Chesney, K.C.B., C.S.I., C.I.E.

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from Quetta to the edge of the Persian province of Seistan. This was considered indispensable to the maintenance of British influence in Persia. The desire of Russia to postpone all railway construction in Persia was seen to point to but one object, viz., her intention so to surround the country with a network of railways in her own dominions, as to make it indifferent to her whether or not there are railways in the intervening territory. The constant pressure of Russia on the borders was naturally exercising a predominant influence on the Persian mind; for, however strong the belief of the Persian Government in the friendliness of England, they perceived the impossibility of material assistance in the case of Russian aggression. It was seen that the construction of the proposed railway would be a powerful factor in the future policy of Central Asia. It was thought that the construction would be cheap, and the line easily protected, while it would exercise a wholesome counterpoise to the 1,200 miles of undefended frontier which Russia is always holding forth to Persia as an unanswerable menace. The success of the Trans-Caspian railway, commercially, shows how necessary is a line of this kind for the development of the country, and the circumstance that the country through which it would pass is very much the same as that lying north of Afghanistan, gives promises of commercial success.

The construction of that railway as far as Nushki is now completed.

I arrived in London on 9th March in a wild snow-storm. During the summer it was decided that the state of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's health would not allow of his return to Persia, and Sir Frank Lascelles[1] was transferred from Bucharest to Tehran as

[1] The Right Hon. Sir Frank Cavendish Lascelles, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin.

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His Majesty's Minister and Plenipotentiary. I accompanied him to his new post, which he reached on 14th November. I would here say that I enjoyed the pleasure of Sir Frank's generous and genial hospitality all the time I was with him at the Legation in Tehran. He was received in audience by the Shah on the 16th, and made a most favourable impression on His Majesty. I was present on this occasion, and the Shah remarked pleasantly on my having kept my promise to return to Persia.

Sir Frank was burdened at once with all the trouble attending the unfortunate episode of the Tobacco Regie monopoly, the particulars of which I told in "Persia Revisited."[1] On 10th December the popular agitation against that monopoly reached a crisis, and abstention from smoking, in obedience to the moullas' decree, became general among the troops as well as the people. The next day it was stated that the movement had extended to the Shah's household. Placards in plenty were posted up, railing at the Shah, and threatening the Firangis (Europeans). On the 18th, the Shah's draft proclamation of cancelment of the monopoly was communicated to the moullas, who were not, however, prepared to withdraw the prohibition to smoke without sanction from Mirza Mahomed Hassan, the High Priest of Samera, Kerbela, with whom telegraphic communication was maintained. On the 27th, the proclamation was posted throughout the town, but as the police were suspected of fostering the agitation, military guards relieved them at certain places. I accompanied Sir Frank to an interview with the Shah that day, when references were made which indicated that the popular excitement had ceased. But suddenly, on 4th January, a riot broke out in the town, caused by the attempted arrest of the leading popular moulla, Mirza Hassan Ashtiani, whose adherents

[1] Published in 1896.

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assembled and raised a tumult in the bazars. In attempting to quell this disturbance the Deputy-Governor of the town and his officials were assaulted and beaten, and then the mob assembled threateningly at the Shah's palace. The Naib-es-Sultaneh, Commander-in-Chief (brother of the Shah), was sent out to calm the people, but his appearance had quite the opposite effect, and he was forced to run to escape their fury; with difficulty he reached a place of safety, and then ordered his guard to fire on the mob, of whom four were killed and two wounded. The Shah, on hearing of this, had his numerous palace guards reinforced by a regiment which could be trusted, and shut himself up in the "ark," the inner refuge.

The next day, the 5th, I accompanied Sir Frank to the Shah's palace to see the Prime Minister, who had been kept there all night. We heard that the townspeople, under the leadership of the moulla, Mirza Hasan Ashtiani, were greatly excited over the events of the previous day, and had demanded the immediate departure of the Tobacco Regie people, compensation in money for the relatives of those who had been killed and wounded, and a general pardon for the rioters, all which the Shah in Council had granted. We found the palace full of armed men: weapons of every sort and kind, from the Parthian bow to the latest breech-loader, had been brought forth for the general arming. It was evident that every one felt bound to make a brave show, and the effect was almost ludicrous. Even the pipe and coffee boys were braced and buckled up with belts and daggers, but like many of the others, they looked more ready for flight than fight. The whole place seemed in a state of siege, and the precautions taken before we were admitted signified the utmost fear and alarm. The mob outside were civil enough to us, and made way respectfully when asked to do so by our Legation couriers. This

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spoke well for the good feeling of the people generally towards Europeans, and proved that the placards threatening all Christians and unbelievers were but nonsense talk of violently zealous theological students and irresponsible fanatics, who at such times of religious excitement are difficult to control. Later, when I was preparing to leave Tehran for the south, I was told that the Persian Government had some doubts as to the advisability of my journey at that time, fearing lest in consequence of the late excitement over the Regie, ill feeling might be displayed towards me. But I made my journey without taking any of the extra precautions recommended, and I found that the idea of such being necessary was quite wrong. Everywhere on the country roads I received the salutation "Salam alaikim"—"Peace (safety) to thee"—or its equivalent in other modes of expression. In the towns, villages, and caravanserais, where I came much in contact with the people, I was always well received, and saw no signs of disrespect or disfavour.

On the riot extending through the bazars the people flocked to the mosques, where meetings are generally held in times of popular excitement, and the Imam Juma (Chief Priest) went to the great Shahi (royal) Mosque to address the people. He ascended the pulpit, and was in the midst of an impassioned oration urging loyalty to the Shah, when a shouting mob, bearing the bodies of the men who had been killed by the palace guard, entered, and roused the whole congregation to fury. The preacher, who, being son-in-law to the Shah, was not of the popular party, was forced to flee before a storm of violent abuse of himself and all his relations, male and female. This ugly display of popular fury added considerably to the Shah's fears, and brought about the Government's decision to grant what the opposition moullas had demanded for the people; and in order further to restore order, the Government made a request

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through our Legation that the Director-General should at once issue a public notice to the effect that the Tobacco Regie had ceased to work in Persia. The Director-General's reply was that on the Persian Government giving a letter communicating their decision to cancel the concession, and pay an indemnity, their request would be complied with. This arrangement was carried out.

At the interview with the Prime Minister, Sir Frank asked me to mention what I had observed regarding the garrison of Tehran and the feeling among the soldiers, and with his permission I proceeded to explain that as the army was not regularly paid it could not be relied upon to support the Government. I showed that of the nominal Tehran garrison of five thousand little more than half were present, and working, as very many of them did, among the people at daily labour of every kind, in order to earn a living, or something small wherewith to eke out the pittance from long arrears of pay which they occasionally received, it was difficult to believe that they would act loyally. I said they would probably obey orders on the first impulse, but with a continuance of trouble, they would break away to plunder and then disperse to their homes. The Grand Vazir smiled when I said that, employed as so many were as small money-lenders, butchers, bakers, and shopkeepers, it was not to be expected that they would fire upon a crowd which contained their debtors and friends who helped them towards a livelihood. He signified approval of my remarks, and said he wished they could be repeated to the Shah.

I accompanied Sir Frank to an audience of the Shah four days later, viz., 9th January. His Majesty talked of the recent events, and explained that the arrest of the turbulent moulla, which was the immediate cause of the riot on the 4th, was from *trop de zèle* on the

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part of his brother, the Commander-in-Chief, who was also, *ex officio*, Governor of the town. After a long conversation, Sir Frank said that I, a well-wisher of His Majesty and his Government, would, with his permission, state what I knew about the troops in garrison, and the army generally, and then I repeated what I had said to the Grand Vazir. I added what I had since learnt regarding a late large consignment of breech-loading rifles from Vienna, with ammunition and accoutrements, being stored in a Government caravanserai, close to the walls of the city, under a nominal guard of about fifty men, of whom quite one-third were absentees, and said that in the present state of popular excitement, the temptation to arm should not be offered. The Shah was good enough to say that I had spoken well, and we heard two days afterwards that these spare arms had been removed to a fort 3 miles from the city, also that a considerable sum of money had been provided for partial payment of arrears to the garrison. While speaking to the Shah, I had in my mind what had been said by the men of the Tehran city regiment which His Majesty had reviewed a few days before the outbreak in the town. In order to stimulate their loyalty he reminded them that they ate the bread of the Royal Kajars, the ruling dynasty. That same day, the men's rejoinder, spoken in a low voice on parade and heard only by a few bystanders, was known throughout the bazars: "The Shah forgets that we haven't eaten his bread for nine months past," alluding to their pay being nine months in arrear. But none of these men had the courage of their opinions, as was shown by a poor Bengali horseman in the following story, which was told by an Indian Jemadar to a party of native soldiers who were comparing the honest and regular payment of troops in the English service, with the custom of long arrears in Asiatic armies. The Jemadar's story was: "The

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Raja of Moorshedabad once asked what that was that did not happen last year, has not happened this year, and will not happen next year? And the chiefs, and the merchants, the astrologers, and the hakims, could give no answer; but a poor horseman stepped forth, and having kissed the ground, and put his forehead to the earth, rose, and folding his arms in the attitude of respect, said: 'May Your Highness' shadow never be less, and may you live a thousand years, as long as your father the sun, and your brother the moon, but Your Highness did not pay your servants last year, you have not paid them this year, and Your Highness' people therefore cannot expect to be paid next year.' With a low salam the man retired, expecting doubtless to lose his ears, but on the contrary, the Raja ordered him a 'khalat' (dress of honour), and that year he paid the army its arrears."

As the Shah had expressed a wish to have a military report concerning his Turkoman frontier on the Russian boundary, and it was of advantage to us to have the latest information from that quarter, it was arranged with the Persian Government that I should go there, and travel from the Caspian to the Afghan border. When all my preparations were completed, the Russian Legation protested to the Persian Government against my visit to the Turkoman country, saying that my presence there would certainly excite the Turkomans, and might produce serious disturbances. The Shah had good reason to fear disturbances there, for these were generally caused by agents from the Russian side, and accordingly he suggested that my visit should, for the present at all events, be postponed. We were prepared to show that it was necessary, in the interests of Persia, to carry out what the Shah had himself proposed, but on the matter being referred to the Foreign Office, the answer was, not to irritate the Russians, and therefore to postpone the

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journey. Accordingly, it was arranged that I should go to the south of Persia, and I made a tour *viâ* Yezd, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Khonsar, visiting *en route* the Arab, Kashkai, and Bakhtiari tribes. This occupied me during the months of April, May, and June. I was amused to hear afterwards of the suspicions of the Russian Legation as to my real movements, it having been said that I had purposely become lost to view in the great salt desert, and was probably working up towards the Herat corner of the Afghan frontier, so as to traverse the Turkoman country from that side to the Caspian, reversing the plan of route which had been countermanded.

I began this journey by driving 92 miles to Kum in a dogcart, doing the distance in two days with four horses. Much progress had been made in the construction of the road since I passed over it in November 1890. I rode post to Kashan, 68 miles, on the third day, 4th April, and there joined my caravan which I had despatched from Tehran on 26th March. After a day's halt to put all in travelling trim, I started on the 6th for Yezd, by the road which more or less skirts the great salt desert of Central Persia all the way. From what I had read and heard of the travels of others along this road, I was inclined to think that the villages and cultivation had enlarged and extended of late years: the natural increase in population had resulted in more labour being expended in tunnelling to conduct water from untapped sources at greater distances. Water is the great wonder worker in these sandy tracts, converting the bare and barren into fertile fields and fine fruit gardens. The villages are really few and far between; in fact they are oases in the desert, and the great stretches of sterile land between them, bearing merely a scanty covering of camel thorn, and forage and fuel plants, form a dreary, desolate waste. There is a great absence of wild animal life in these waterless

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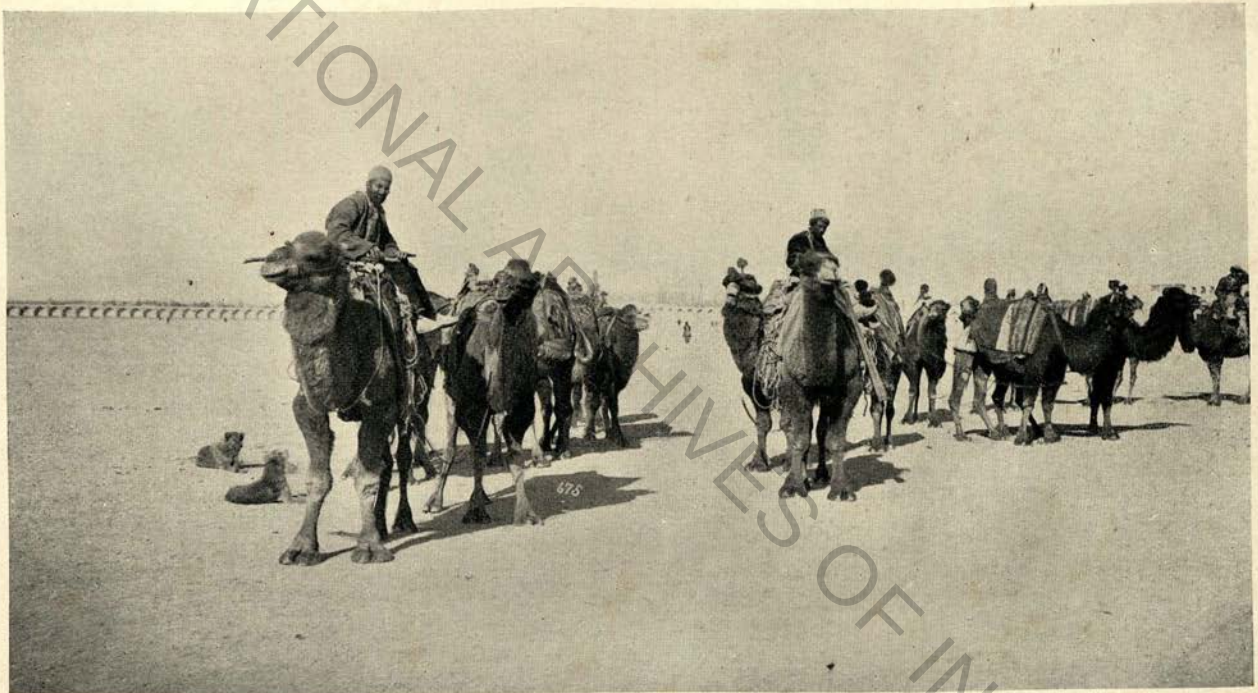

AT YEZD: SHIPS OF THE DESERT.

Sevraguine photo.]

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wastes—both bird and beast. Ominous-looking ravens are occasionally to be seen hovering about in close attendance on sorely distressed beasts of burden which have been abandoned to their fate, and show signs of dropping never to rise again. I noticed a steady traffic along the road from Yezd in large caravans of camels, mules, and donkeys, carrying to the north, henna and cotton and silk goods. All about the villages were to be heard the lively lays of innumerable larks singing to their nesting partners in the green fields below, for it was then the song season of spring. Some of the villages are in clusters, with extensive cultivation in carefully built-up and well-tended terraced fields, and gardens of pomegranate and fig, almond and vine. The pomegranate is a favourite fruit in Persia, as its special keeping qualities allow of the year's crop being stored and remaining fresh till the next season's is ripe. At intervals along the road are underground water-tanks, with open channels and covered ways leading to them for storage of rain water. These are works of benevolence, built as thank offerings for success in this life, or for hope of happiness in the hereafter.

Maibat, the eleventh stage on this road, is a place of some interest. It is divided into Old and New Maibat. The former stands on the edge of a plateau, with an old fort perched high in the centre. The fort is apparently of great age, and probably of the Zoroastrian period. Part of the interior resembles a beehive, half-buried in the ground, with galleries of cell-like rooms above and below, evidently the barracks of those days. All the available flat spaces in Old Maibat were under wheat, showing singularly rich crops growing on the garden grounds and earthen courtyards, terraces, and even house floors of the old ruins. New Maibat is built on the lower plain under the old town, and, viewed from above, displayed a lovely spread of cultiva-

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tion, with well-kept house courts and fruit gardens. There is a large group of flourishing villages round about Maibat, with an abundance of water, brought by underground and surplus above-ground channels from sources supplied by the snow-capped Sherkoh mountains, 30 miles distant. In the Yezd district water is conveyed by these underground channels from very great distances, some of them, owned by the Yezd townspeople, being marvels of industry and ingenuity, bringing water from distances of 30 miles and more. No pains are spared to extract every possible drop of water from the heart of the hills, and as a result the sandy plain around Yezd is able to yield very fine crops, and fruit in abundance. The desert there has been made literally to blossom as the rose, Yezd being famous for its rich rose gardens and production of the rose-water and attar essence, so much in demand in the East.

Between Maibat and the next stage, Ujatabad, there was considerable wheat cultivation on the higher plateau, but the villages and fields further on, where the land dips, were being rapidly covered with shifting sand. The set of the wind which moves the sand is from the adjacent mountains, and the fields and houses on that side of the villages were entirely buried. On the lee side, some houses remained habitable, and a few fields held crops struggling hard with the choking sand. At Ujatabad were two large rose gardens, where the manufacture of attar and rose-water was being carried on. Here the shifting sand, advancing steadily and slowly by a rippling movement over the sandhills under the close action of a low surface wind, had evidently threatened to destroy the gardens, and they were protected by very high walls, so high that it was a wonder they stood. They had been well planned, however, with very broad bases, and narrowing to quite a top edge. These walls had arrested the forward

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sand flow, and turned its course round the sides, thus protecting the fields behind them, and driving the sand to force its way on to the desert beyond. I found the rose garden, in which I got house accommodation, in full bloom, and picking going on, with the rose-water distilling apparatus at work. Here, for the first time that season, I heard the nightingale. The rose garden was appropriately tenanted by several pairs, and the small boys engaged in rose-picking told me all about their nests, eggs, and young. There is a great demand in the towns for young male birds, which, by being taken early, are brought up to sing in captivity, this, I believe, being rarely the case with the European bird. The shopkeepers in the towns like to have their pet birds by them, and in the pairing season the caged nightingales may be heard all over the bazars singing sweetly and longingly for the partners they know of by instinct, but never see.

At Ujatabad, for the first time after leaving Kashan, I saw the plough at work, and that was an experiment, with ponies yoked. Everywhere along the road I had seen the soil broken up and turned by the spade, and owing to the steady hand-work and evident plentiful food, the peasants there are of a very robust and superior type. An observant Persian gentleman remarked to me that in Persia, wherever the conditions of husbandry demand the hardest labour, the peasants are in every way better off, and of finer physique, than in places where tillage facilities are greater, and the crops more easily raised.

I found Yezd a busy centre of trade, and a place of meeting of English and Russian goods in close competition. It is noted for its weavers, its dyes, and its dyers, and cotton cloth is imported in large quantities, to be dyed and exported with the locally-made fabrics. Cotton twist is now largely imported from Bombay, and goes with local threads to swell the great output of cotton cloths, for which Yezd is famous. These, with

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its silks, are sent all over Persia, and even to Baku and Askhabad, in Russian territory.

There are some thousands of Guebres (Parsees) in Yezd and its surrounding villages, engaged in trade, agriculture, and weaving. They are very laborious, and generally successful in their daily occupations of life. Among them are some rich merchants who have close commercial relations with the prosperous Parsee community in Bombay, and own a large share of the import and export trade of Yezd. By ancient custom and local law they are condemned to suffer some rather degrading disabilities. The maintenance of this law is a matter of keen personal interest to the official and priestly classes, as it places the Parsees at their mercy, and compels them to seek protection and exemption from annoyance by means of money. The well-to-do Guebres, as humble supplicants, are a source of permanent profit and easy income to their private and official protectors.

But as a persecuted race, the Parsees are better off than the Jews, for being generally in good circumstances, they are able by a judicious use of money to secure for themselves more favourable treatment than their fellow-sufferers at the hands of their common oppressor, the Mahomedan. There were at the time of my visit about two thousand Jews in Yezd, employed chiefly as weavers, and in the preparation of the gold and silver thread which is used in the manufacture of the rich fabrics for which the place is famed. In Persia the Jews are comparatively poor, not being allowed any facilities for becoming rich. Efforts have been made from time to time to secure practical observance of the late Shah's desire to grant religious liberty to all his subjects alike, and this was carried out at Tehran, but it has been found difficult to enforce the gracious example in the provinces. Fanaticism and greed combine there to maintain the old oppressive law.

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Yezd is a great Babi centre: it is said that quite one-half of the Mahomedan population are Babis, known or declared among themselves, or secret sympathisers. Their numbers are increasing, and the cruel murders which took place in 1891 brought forward many new members of the sect. The Babis say that one martyr makes many proselytes. They have been called seceders from Islam, but they claim to be only advocates for Mahomedan Church reform. They have been persecuted and punished in the cruellest fashion, even to torture and death, under the accusation that they are a dangerous body who aim at the subversion of the State as well as the Church. But better counsels now prevail to show that the time has come to cease from persecuting these sectarians. They say they desire to return to original Mahomedanism as it first came from the Arabian desert, pure and simple, and free from the cruel intolerance that killed the loving spirit of faith, hope, and charity which they believe it originally breathed. They are peaceful and quiet, and seek to soften the hearts of those who persecute them by showing that they but wish for peace on earth and goodwill to all men. They have a widespread organisation throughout Persia, and many moullas and syuds, generally the most learned, have joined them. The Babis may yet take a great part in the regeneration of Persia. They have a confident belief in themselves: one of them said to me, "Of every five people round the Shah, two, if not three, are of us."

I had fully intended to go on to Kerman from Yezd, but a bad accident, in which I received a severe cut on the head, with other cuts and bruises, made me change my plans. The cut on my head was so long in healing that, as I was without a companion on the road, I feared to run the risk of being laid up amidst the dirt and discomfort of a caravanserai on the farther desert journey to Kerman. I therefore decided to pass on to

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Shiraz by the short Aberkoh desert route, and I left Yezd on 23rd May for Taft, the first stage out. On the mountains between that place and the desert, I saw flocks of uniformly terra-cotta coloured goats, so like in colour to the soil and rocks, that at a little distance movement could only be observed in the mass. This is the result of special breeding, so as to produce the soft underdown which comes with winter cold of an even, delicate, light-brown hue, for use in the manufacture of the very fine felts which Taft is noted for. In the same mountains are the famous marble quarries of Turan-Pusht, worked since many centuries, the stone from which is carried far over Persia for ornamental and memorial purposes. This marble is like Oriental alabaster, of a close grain, free from veins or spots, very translucent, and showing in transparency a delicate cream tint. I saw beautiful pieces used as grave headstones in the village burial-grounds, through which the afternoon slanting sun showed a soft shine of light.

I crossed the Aberkoh desert on the 26th, 34 miles over an extensive flat of earth, salt, and sand. In the centre is a salt lake with glistening encrusted surface. As the desert is said to be a great robber haunt, a number of travellers, who had delayed at the last village for caravan company across, attached themselves to my party for protection, saying in compliment that there was always safety with the "Firangi." I observed that the villagers on both sides of the desert were all well armed, chiefly with Shiraz-made percussion guns, and among them were several sportsmen, who told me that at certain places and seasons the wild ass was to be found in some numbers on the borders of the desert. They said it was an exceedingly wary animal, but they occasionally were successful in their hunts, and as the flesh is tender and good, they were able to sell it profitably as a delicacy. It was

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evident that a European was a rare sight in the Aberkoh villages, and I was accordingly an object of eager gaze and keen curiosity, the women especially seeking every excuse to pass and pause before my open quarters, in order to see the face, and observe the ways of a Firangi. I sometimes found this curiosity a help in finding the way out of villages in the early morning start, as the women on the look-out over the courtyard walls would point to the direction, in answer to my enquiry.

In passing on from the desert to the uplands I was able to notice very clearly the manner in which the hills are being lowered, and the plains raised, by the steady action of wind and weather. The hills, being of bare friable rock, crumble away throughout the year from the effect of heat and frost, rain and snow, and seem to be rolling down to the sloping sandy plains, which appear to run as a great wave upward on a shelving shore. The plains where I observed this are about 5,500 feet, and the hills about 8,000 feet above the sea. Eventually, in the long, long run of time, all will be levelled up, the hills disappearing in a billowy plain.

At a distance of 40 miles from the Aberkoh desert I arrived at Dehbid, on the regular post road from Tehran to Bushire, and my eyes were refreshed with the sight of the splendidly maintained Indo-European telegraph line which passes along it. I had occasion to observe then, and at other times, the admirable work done by the European line inspectors of that service. They have charge of the various extended sections, and their duties generally necessitate isolated residence in lonely places. They must be prepared at all times, and in all weathers (the day heat is great in summer and the cold is intense in winter), to move out and repair the line when interruptions occur, or snow and storm partially damage it.

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Some of these inspectors are known to acquire a good knowledge of the language and of local affairs, in a manner which makes their services more than usually valuable, and this is often of advantage both to travellers and neighbouring villagers. The fact of the Telegraph and all its establishment being under British protection naturally gives importance to the inspectors in charge, but public opinion goes further in conceding the right of "sanctuary" to those who seek asylum in the Telegraph premises. An instance of this within my knowledge occurred at Isfahan in 1890, during the murderous attacks led by fanatical moullas against the Babis, when a number of them, pursued by a blood-thirsty mob, claimed "sanctuary" in the Telegraph Office there, and were allowed asylum. A proof of confidence in the word and work of the local European inspector was given just before I arrived at Dehbid. The migration of the nomads from the lowlands to the highlands was then taking place, and a party of unruly Kashkais, choosing to interpret some "bazar" rumours from Tehran regarding the Shah's health, which they heard there, as meaning his death, proceeded to indulge in threats of robbery and violence. They prefaced all by saying, "The Shah is dead," this conveying to them and others a good excuse for the lawlessness which used to prevail in old days between the death of the king and the accession of his successor. These men refused to pay for food and forage for themselves and their horses, and began to take what they wanted by force. The reply to all remonstrances was, "The Shah is dead; go away before worse happens to you." In despair, the villagers went to the Telegraph Office, and begged the inspector to help them. This he did by interviewing the nomads and informing them that the Shah was not dead, but well and strong, and that he, by means of the telegraph wire, had daily and hourly certain knowledge of all that happened at

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Tehran. A short talk convinced them that this was true, and they settled their small account amicably with the villagers.

From Dehbid I passed along the post road to Shiraz, visiting the tomb of Cyrus and the ruins of Persepolis on the way. I need not attempt to describe the ruins of the stately courts of Persepolis, which, in the days of its glittering splendour, during the reigns of Darius and Xerxes, was the talk of the ancient world. His Royal Highness, the Rukn-ud-Dowleh, brother of the Shah Nasr-ed-Din, and newly appointed Governor-General of Fars, was then about entering his province near Dehbid, and was moving down slowly with a large camp, and a following numbering about twelve hundred. Immediately on crossing the provincial border the whole camp was, according to custom, to be provided with free food on a liberal scale, and I saw at Dehbid the requisitions for the supplies to be furnished there. These were causing much perturbation to the villagers on whom the burden to provide was laid. As I passed down the road I met many local dignitaries and officials hurrying up to meet the new Governor-General, and among them, the Kawam-ul-Mulk of Shiraz, a notable of considerable inherited wealth, which had been increased by the opportunities given him as Governor of Darab and other places. He was also hereditary Begler Begi (Mayor) of Shiraz. The late Governor-General had left the province in March, and the Rukn-ed-Dowleh had sent one of his own people to act as deputy until his arrival. This official had been busy with reports on the Kawam's modes of making money, which went to show that he was fair game for his master to hunt down. In the old, old time, "Darius the King" used to hold his Court at Persepolis on Nao-Roz, the time of the Vernal Equinox, to receive the reports of his officers and the tributes of his subjects, and His Royal Highness the new Governor-General had the conceit

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to follow this great example. He therefore held his first provincial Court there on the 7th and 8th May, to receive all those who had come forth to welcome him, and to accept the gifts and purses of gold which are presented on such occasions. He was displeased with the Kawam, and found fault with him for coming with a large following: it was known that he would have equally found fault had he come with a small following, on the ground that he showed a want of respect. These were the days when the provinces were farmed and governorships sold to the highest bidder. The Rukn-ed-Dowleh had been obliged to pay heavily for the Fars appointment, and he had hoped for a large sum in gift from the Kawam to recoup himself in part, but was disappointed. It soon became evident that the Kawam was in disfavour, and rumours at once went about as to his coming downfall. His quick-witted partisans said that the wolf from the north was hungering for an excuse to beat and eat the Shiraz sheep (even *they* could not compare their Begler Begi to an innocent lamb).

I reached Shiraz on 5th May, and remained there a week. The weather was delightful then, and I observed that the climate of that favoured place is so temperate and equable as to bring together the birds and fruits of the East and West, North and South, for there the plump little Indian "bulbul" and the "hoopoo" meet the European nightingale and the cuckoo, and the fruits range from apples to dates. I had heard the nightingale all the way over from the oases in the desert near Yezd. The coming of the new Governor-General was the general subject of conversation at Shiraz, the people fearing that their interests would be sacrificed to satisfy the great number of hungry place hunters, sons, relatives, and others who were accompanying him. His Royal Highness not having reached Shiraz previous to my departure,

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I went to visit him in his camp, which I found to be of semi-royal style. It contained sixteen carriages for him and his establishment that had been driven all the way from Tehran, for the few portions of the direct post road from Tehran to Shiraz which carriages cannot pass along, can be turned by side routes, and thus the Governor-General was able to travel all the way in a barouche: it was necessary that he should do so, for he was unused to horseback, very unlike his brother the Shah, who rode well to the last.

After paying this visit, I passed away north towards Isfahan, travelling by the Kashkai highlands. But before entering on a short description of that journey I shall tell what befel the Kawam-ul-Mulk (Begler Begi) of Shiraz, owing to the new Governor-General's displeasure with him. The expected blow fell shortly after in Shiraz, when, on various pretexts, he was adjudged guilty of contumacy and other imaginary offences, and cruelly maltreated. He was bastinadoed, received a severe blow on the mouth to enforce silence, and was then imprisoned. It was said the contumacy alleged against him consisted in resisting payment of an arbitrary fine of great amount. His son, the deputy Begler Begi, took sanctuary in a mosque, and was able to communicate with the Shah by telegraph, on which His Majesty ordered his brother to release the Kawam. The order not being immediately obeyed, information was conveyed to the Shah (who was then in camp in Irak), whereupon the Sartip (Colonel) in charge of the Telegraph Office at Shiraz was instructed by the Grand Vazir to take the Shah's telegraphic order in person to the place of imprisonment and see it obeyed. The Sartip carried out his orders resolutely in defiance of local authority, and took the Kawam out of prison, who at once proceeded north to lay his case before the Shah. Thus the new Governor-General became the unconscious means of showing the people

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of Shiraz how well the institution of direct communication with the sovereign, founded by Darius the King, worked, even against the interests of the Shah's brother. And the people also remembered that His Royal Highness had studied to take to himself some of the prestige and privileges of Darius the King, by holding his first provincial Court at Persepolis.

Regarding direct communication with the Shah, the Persian Telegraph Department has a peculiar importance in being the secret agency by which His Majesty is served with an independent and daily report of all that goes on throughout the country. The system of direct reports of the conduct of governors by special resident officials, which was established in the days of Darius the King, has developed into the present secret service daily telegrams. The telegraph enables the Shah to make his presence felt in distant places as well as his power, and I know that the late Nasr-ed-Din Shah was in the habit of occasionally summoning a governor to the office at the other end of the wire to hear his words spoken on the spot. I remember in 1892, when a band of Turkoman mounted robbers had revived the terrors of the old days as related in Morier's "Haji Baba," by raiding up to the high road between Tehran and Meshed, the Shah ordered the attendance of the Governor of Shahrud, through which place the road passes, at the telegraph office there; and when that official announced in metaphor his abasement on the earthen floor, the message came direct to him as spoken by the Shah: "You fool, you son of a fool, you father of fools!" (really expressed in untranslatable language) "while you are sleeping off the effects of debauchery, my subjects are suffering," etc., etc.

The Shah was opposed to the degrading punishment of the bastinado being applied to men of rank, and, moreover, it was his policy to protect the wealthy old families, with traditional influence among the people,

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against the rapacity of the provincial governors. The Kawam's position in the province of Fars was a high one. There had been Kawams in Shiraz for centuries, and the poets, Sadi and Hafiz, wrote of them as local Magnates in their times some hundreds of years ago. The Kawam had a large and strong following, for he was also Chief of the Il-i-Khamseh, the "five tribes," Turk and Arab, furnishing contingents of both horse and foot for military service. There was no one tribal head whom all would obey, but they held well together under the Kawam.

I made the acquaintance of Nasrulla Khan, the Chief of the Kashkai tribe, who was in camp near Shiraz, and arranged with him for my journey towards Isfahan by the nomads' summer pasture grounds on the Sarhad route, which lies over lands at an elevation of 6,000 to 8,000 feet. I rode out from Shiraz, 20 miles, to visit him, and after a quick change of clothes, went to his camp by appointment, meeting on the way a hundred of his mounted tribesmen, well equipped and armed with Martini rifles, whom he had sent to escort me. It was a warm May morning, and after the formal reception, he called for refreshments, which consisted of tea and Bass' ale. On seeing my pleased look of recognition of the Bass red label and the sparkling ale, he explained that being strict in his observance of Mahomedan prohibition of wine, he could only offer me a choice of tea or simple ab-i-jao (barley-water), which, he said with a smile, he believed to be a temperance beverage in England. He told me that when he couldn't get English beer he took the Russian substitute made in Samara, which, of course, I knew to be good strong porter. He added that he preferred the English ale, and he drank two bottles to my one during my short visit. Nasrulla Khan appointed Kara Beg, one of his best agents, to accompany me through the Kashkai highlands, and I found him most capable

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in causing seeming difficulties to disappear. He, in common with many of the nomads, made no pretence of being a total abstainer, and had an opinion on the merits of the best Shiraz wine. He was also keen to form an opinion on good whisky, and when we parted he wheedled me out of two bottles, which he said he would use as a specific against many ills to which he was subject.

The trade caravans generally follow the Sarhad route during the summer months, on account of the good grass and cool climate. They make short stages and long halts to allow of the pack animals enjoying the abundant grazing. I passed on the way the mausoleum of Imam Zada Ismail, with a most flourishing village belonging to it, at an elevation of 8,500 feet. The chief inhabitants are priestly Sheikhs, guardians of the Holy Shrine and the rent free lands with which it is endowed. These lands are all devoted to vine cultivation. The vineyards were beautifully kept, and well walled in, and the bushes looked as if they were tended by those who understood their culture well. Surprising energy had been shown in clearing the stony ground, and much patient labour had been bestowed on the garden-like enclosures. Nowhere in Persia had I seen such extensive vine cultivation in one place, and hillside clearing was still going on for further planting. Raisins are largely made and grapes are exported—Kara Beg, who seemed to know well, said that the specially good grapes are used for wine, but not in the village. I fell in each day with crowds of Kashkai nomads, flitting with all their belongings, mares and foals, flocks and herds, to pass the summer on the cool green uplands. The valleys and plains were studded with blocks of their black tents, and the fallow lands were alive with ploughs at work for the October sowings. The Namgan plain was the prettiest green tract I had seen in Persia, with long stretches of soft

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close turf. A stream wanders sleepily through it, and loses itself in a great morass and forest of tall reeds. This morass is one of the places tradition tells of in which Bahram, the Nimrod King of Persia, was caught and engulfed while following his favourite sport of hunting the "gur"—the wild ass, said to be one of the swiftest of wild animals.[1]

The Kashkais are a powerful military nomad tribe of agricultural as well as pastoral habits. They sow wheat and barley on the high-lying lands, and rice in the low country. Their winter resorts extend from Behbahan, north-west of Shiraz, to Bundar Abbas, in the south-east, a very long stretch. All the pastures on that line are not theirs: others share them, but there is no confusion, as the boundaries of each section and tribe are well defined, and known by long accepted custom and recognised landmarks. They proceed to lay down rice in certain of the lowland places immediately on arrival, and gather in the harvest before they leave in March. They find their winter crops, which were sown before they left, well above ground when they return to the highlands, and as the weather warms they attend to their irrigation. They reap these crops in July and August. The Kashkais are great horse breeders: the breed is small, active, and hardy, just what is wanted for the riders, who may be generally described as of medium height, light weight, and wiry frame. A heavy man is seldom seen among them, nor a fat man. Extreme dryness

[1] Omar Khayyam, when moralising over fleeting human greatness, says in allusion to the Hunter-King's death in a deep sinking morass:—

"In the halls where Great Bahram drank deep,
The foxes whelp and the lions sleep;
Great Bahram was wont to catch the 'gur,'
Now behold Bahram caught by the 'gur.'"

Omar makes play here with the word "gur," which means both "wild ass" (onager) and "grave."—T.E.G.

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of climate, rough living, and much moving about combine to keep them spare. Both men and horses show great powers of endurance on long journeys over rough roads, and they work well on scanty fare and the lightest covering for night cold. The Kashkais would be in their element as mounted infantry. Superior horses are bred, some of them being fine big animals of a high quality, but this can only be done by the chief and his well-protected relations, for with others, immediately a specially good colt is known of, it is demanded for, or by, some one in authority. I have heard elsewhere that as the possession of a known good and unblemished colt or filly means losing it, owners fire so as to disfigure, and make it appear as if done for strain, weakness, or excess growth of some sort. The blemish is thus expected, and is often found to protect the property.

I had been in correspondence with Isfendiar Khan, the popular chief of the powerful Bakhtiari tribe, regarding a visit to him, and I arranged to carry this out from Isfahan. I travelled by the Rukh pass, the main entrance to the Bakhtiari country, and was met there by three musketeers, one of whom, a fine-looking specimen of a rough Highlander, came forward, and with the easy manner of a free mountaineer, sang out to me, "Khosh amaded" (welcome). Shortly afterwards, Isfendiar's youngest brother, Yusuf, met me with a mounted escort, and conducted me to excellent quarters in Kahwa Rukh, a large village town of nearly a thousand houses.[4] Isfendiar arrived the next day with three other brothers and four hundred horsemen. I rode out 5 miles with Yusuf to meet them, and on seeing me approach, the horsemen formed line and advanced in this order, with Isfendiar and his brothers in front of the centre. The chief was conspicuous in wearing the Persian black lambskin cap, all the others having the tribal round

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white felt. The men and horses made a good show, and Isfendiar told me that among them were representatives from every section of the tribe, sent to acknowledge and welcome him as their Ilkhani (chief), for he had been recently so appointed by the Shah; and he was glad that my visit was made at that particular time, as it had a favourable significance in the eyes of his people. The Shah can raise whomsoever he chooses from the lowest to the highest position or post, except in the most powerful of the military tribes, where the nomination to chieftainship is confined to the elders of the two leading families, who represent the direct descent from one head, the one family being in opposition when the other is in power. The monarch may, by his influence or direct power, alter the succession, and place an uncle in the position of a nephew, and sometimes a younger brother over an elder, but the head of the tribe must be of the family of their original chief. The Shah had but lately deposed the old chief, Haji Imam Kuli Khan, and replaced him by his cousin, Isfendiar Khan, whose father, Hussein Kuli Khan, had been chief before the Haji. The Bakhtiaris are an interesting and romantic people: they are of the most ancient Persian descent, and have held their hills and valleys from time immemorial. They are the most numerous and powerful of all the military tribes, and are noted for their superior martial qualities, both as horse and foot. They served Nadir Shah well in his conquering campaign in Afghanistan and India.

I parted with my pleasant host, Isfendiar, and his Bakhtiaris on 4th June, and left for Tehran, *viâ* Faridan, Khonsar, Mahallat, and Kum, with the hope also of meeting the Shah's camp *en route*. I travelled over rolling downs, rich in pasture, with large fields of corn sown broadcast. These fields were bright with the blue corn-flower and the wild

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red poppy, beautiful to look at, but bad for the crops. One of my stages was Chadagan, the territorial head-quarters of the Faridan regiment of infantry which I saw at Ahwaz in December 1890, and the colonel of which I described as being exceptionally good to his men. He had given me an invitation to visit him at Chadagan, but I then had seen little chance of travelling that way. Isfendiar Khan had told me of him marching up from Arabistan with his regiment, on completion of their two years' service away from home. But though disappointed in seeing him, I was fortunate in finding his son there, Abbas Kuli, a young major in the regiment, whom I had also known at Ahwaz, and he made me confortable for the day in his father's house. The large village was the colonel's property, favourably situated in the centre of a well-watered, fertile tract. Great numbers of sheep were to be seen on the pasture lands, the black and white being carefully kept in separate flocks.

Khonsar is a busy town, with a good bazar well supplied in every way, and with all the handicrafts at work, including saddlers and gunsmiths. The great gushing springs, which issue from the hillside at the upper end of the town, form, with its grand shady walnut trees, a very pretty sight, and give the place, on a hot day such as it was when I arrived, a wonderfully pleasant look. It stands at an elevation of 8,000 feet, at the foot of a high precipitous range which rises immediately behind it, a range which at that time, 7th June, carried plenty of snow. The valley below the town is rich in cultivation and fine walnut trees. I lodged in the house of a Haji who had lately made the great pilgrimage to Mecca and Jerusalem. He had liberal views on most matters, and said that they all feared and disliked moulla rule. He spoke of the religious liberty they longed for, and ended by saying, that if Persia were blessed with

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the full freedom allowed in India, it would be found that the Babis make up more than half of the population, as the many who agree with them in secret would at once openly declare their belief. On the 10th June I went to Mahallat, a pretty place high up in an elevated fertile valley, with an abundance of fine walnut trees. The Shah's camp had been there for a week, and left its mark. As my baggage mules passed through the village, the sound of their jangling bells brought out women and children to look and enquire who the traveller was, and when told he was a Firangi, the women said that was a blessing, for the Firangis paid their way, and gave no trouble. They had feared it meant a return of some of the Shah's people, of whose visit they had had too much: they had eaten all their food, they said, and cleared the fields like locusts. Advantage was then taken of the opportunity to charge me famine prices for all supplies.

Mahallat is closely associated with the name of Agha Khan, the last spiritual head and leader of the Ismailiya (sect of Ismail, son of the seventh Imam) who resided in Persia: he was a descendant of Hassan Sabbeh (college companion of Omar Khayyam), who in the eleventh century formed the sect into a band of fighting fanatics, similar in character to the Dervishes of the Soudan under the Mahdi. Their enthusiasm in carrying out the will of their chief knew no bounds, and blind belief in him and his words gave them courage to face death in any form. For him they committed deeds of assassination which had the effect of deterring all who attempted to defeat and disperse his robber band, known as the Hassanis (assassins). Agha Khan took up his residence at Mahallat, and after varied experiences, first as Governor, and afterwards as a fighting rebel, he fled to Kandahar about 1840. He was there of some service to the Indian

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Government in the first Afghan war, and at its conclusion was given an annual allowance, with permission to reside in India. He settled in Bombay, and took keenly to racing. He was very successful on the race-courses of Western and Southern India, as the owner of Indian Derby and other winners. He was a well-known character at the Poona Meeting, and there, in 1862-63, I made his acquaintance. Having his sectaries at Baghdad, he had the means of obtaining Arab horses of the best blood for racing purposes. The family in Bombay continued to keep a racing stable to a late date.

Ismailis, known in India as Khojas, are found over a great part of Asia, and in Egypt. I have already mentioned that I found them among the people of Wakhan and Sirikol, and heard of them in the other secluded small states on the upper Oxus. I met at Mahallat Abul Kassim Khan, grand-nephew of the late Agha Khan, who was residing there in charge of the landed property and the interests of the family. He told me that a deputation went every year to Bombay, to receive the annual allowance granted by the Agha for the support of the descendants of old followers who reside at Mahallat. Agha Khan lived to a great age, and died about 1877. He was succeeded, as head of the sect, by his son, Ali Shah, who, dying about 1890, was succeeded by his son, Sultan Mahomed Shah, now so well known in London as "The Agha Khan." The family, at the time I was at Mahallat, 1892, was on friendly terms with the Shah, who was pleased to accept the valuable presents occasionally sent by them. Among these was a very fine elephant with splendid trappings, which used to make its appearance with one or two others belonging to the Shah, on gala days at Tehran. Agha Khan spent the income received in offerings, as befitted the head of a religious order, but his son, Ali Shah, as a provision

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against possible change of feeling or fortune, accumulated part, and invested judiciously in house property at Bombay. This was animadverted upon, and the present head, Sultan Mahomed Shah, has returned to liberal observance of the demands of charity, generosity, and hospitality.

On the 12th June I crossed the mountain range above Mahallat, and descended to Kum, where I arrived on the 14th. The heat by day was great, and for the first time during my journey I had to travel by night to avoid it. The same great heat continued to Tehran, and I was glad to find myself in the cool summer quarters of the British Legation at Gulhak on the 20th. The discomfort of heat, without any appliances to mitigate it, was much aggravated by the plague of black flies, sand flies, and mosquitoes, which swarm in the caravanserais in summer.

I ascertained during this tour that as many and as good men and horses, well fitted for the purposes of war, can be found in the south as in the north of Persia. It had been generally supposed that the best fighting men were of the northern provinces, but this was due to the fact of the British officers, who were lent from the Indian army in the early part of the last century, having been employed in the regiments raised there, and which at that time mainly composed the Persian standing army. This was a result of the reigning dynasty belonging to the north, and having little knowledge of, or confidence in, the people of the south. It was obviously the policy of the Persian Government at first to keep the foreign officers in their service under their immediate observation in the north, and thus no opportunity was given them of ascertaining the military qualities of the southern tribes.

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CHAPTER XI

(1892)

WHEN I came back from my journey in Central and Southern Persia, the Shah was established in the Shimran highlands, within easy distance of the various legations occupying their usual summer quarters on the cool mountain slopes, and I had ample opportunity to study the characteristics of people and the condition of things at the Royal Court. To me, Nasr-ed-Din Shah appeared an interesting typical king of a nomadic race. Up to his fifty years of reign he was remarkable in retaining all his physical and mental energies: his health was excellent, due no doubt to his nomadic life and simple habits. He was passionately fond of the chase, and passed much of his time in the saddle. It could well be said of him, as of the ancient Persian monarchs, that the Royal edicts were written "At the stirrup of the King," for his Vazirs had to accompany him to the hunting-grounds, and this prevented the Court becoming lapped in luxury. He never seemed to sigh for the pleasures and advantages of high civilisation such as he had experienced and seen in his European tours: he certainly enjoyed the change on those occasions, but he was always glad to go back to the "rest and repose of Persia." I remember a newspaper account of his return from the last tour of 1889, in which it was mentioned that he shed tears on crossing the

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Russo-Persian frontier, and said in sorrow, "Good-bye to civilisation." If tears were shed, they probably were of joy on coming home. It was known that he secretly welcomed the Russian request for postponement of railway construction in Persia for a considerable term of years, when this was put forward as a *quid pro quo* on the British diplomatic victory in securing the opening of the Karun river to the navigation of the world. He appreciated the advantages of railways in other countries, but did not think they were necessary in Persia, where the Eastern proverb still applies, that time was made for slaves.

Nasr-ed-Din's pleasant, easy-going disposition sometimes led diplomatists to venture on lecturing him, and then he could be diverting as well as dignified. An instance of this occurred when a grown-up lad was executed under distressing circumstances which produced unfavourable comment in the European colony at Tehran. The youth was a son of the Guardian Superintendent of the Palace, a permanent official of high position and responsibility, specially charged with the first opening and last closing of the state rooms containing the Royal throne and treasures, and giving access to the Shah's inner apartments. The lad had fallen into bad company, and having spent and lost all he could lay his hands on in drinking and gambling, listened to cunning suggestions that he might take advantage of his father's position to steal some of the palace valuables. As he often accompanied his father in the capacity of assistant, he was well known to the guards and attendants, and the idea was put into his head to secrete himself in the state rooms at closing time, and during the night to remove with a chisel or knife some portions of the gold casing and ornamental work from the "gold chairs" in the Royal reception hall. When the hall was not required for ceremonial purposes these chairs were covered with a large sheet,

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which was only occasionally removed. The youth carried out the plan of hiding in the rooms, and having succeeded in wrenching off some pieces of gold during the night, passed out unperceived or not noticed when his father opened the doors in the morning. The robbery was not discovered at once, and when it became known, the agony of the old superintendent was intense, for he saw it could not be kept secret from the Shah, who would be certain to view the circumstance with great suspicion as well as anger. There was much alarm in the palace when the inmates learnt that a thief had been able to gain entrance, notwithstanding all the precautions of close watch and guard. The Shah's brother, the titular Governor of Tehran, was most zealous in trying every source of information, so as to have the credit of finding a clue to the crime, and many empty promises of high reward were made, with the result that the superintendent's son, who was known to the police as a frequenter of drinking and gambling dens, was suspected. He had been lately observed to become suddenly possessed of money, and following up the clue, some scrap pieces of the stolen gold, which had been sold in the bazar, were recovered. Then, under police pressure and promise of his life from the Shah's brother, he confessed the crime. The favourites in the palace, from selfish interest in the Shah's life, pressed for the youth's death, notwithstanding the promise that had been given. They pointed to what might have happened had a daring accomplice been with him, determined to do violence to His Sacred Majesty; and they urged the absolute necessity of exemplary punishment. The Shah reluctantly gave the fatal order: the red-clad executioners took the lad's life, and published the punishment by the exposure of the body, showing the severed throat (the usual mode of execution in Persia) on a rude bier, which they bore through the

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bazars, demanding largesse from the shopkeepers, and refusing to move on with their ghastly burden until a sufficient sum of money was given. The dreadful publicity of the disgrace, and the violation of the promise said to have been made, caused severe remarks in the European quarter, and much sympathy was expressed for the poor lad's father. One of the Foreign Ministers felt so strongly on the subject that he took advantage of an audience of the Shah to mention it, when His Majesty, as was often his wont after the formal business was over, asked concerning any news in the European quarter. The Minister introduced the subject by alluding discreetly to the executioners' procession through the bazars as if it had been done without the knowledge of His Majesty or the Governor. The Shah at once accepted the veiled challenge (as he regarded the reference) to discuss the whole incident, and after explaining it from his point of view, he "turned the tables," and quietly spoke his mind to the Minister. He said that his personality was as sacred as that of any other Sovereign Majesty, and he was more closely connected with the Church than many of them, for not only was he Defender, but he was also Head of the National Faith; that his person and abode were inviolable; that sacrilege had been committed, and the criminal was judicially condemned to death. Then, suspecting that he might be accused of methods of barbarism, he proceeded to say airily that it was not so very long ago that men's lives were taken by the public executioner in the freest country in Europe for the theft of a sheep, a very little thing indeed in Persia, and in reference to the reply that all that was now changed in the West, the Shah remarked that change was slow in the old, old East.

At the time of the greatest heat that summer (1892), rumours came of a severe epidemic of cholera prevail-

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ing at Meshed, a great Shiah pilgrim resort, where the worst insanitary conditions tend to make the place at all times more or less a hotbed of disease. The dispersion of the pilgrims threatened to carry the disease to the capital, and as a preventive measure a strong cordon of troops was drawn round Tehran to establish strict quarantine detention and examination. But the great salt desert on the flank of the Meshed road afforded facilities for evading the quarantine, and the city Jew pedlars managed to pass to and fro and purchase the clothes of dead pilgrims, which, eventually, were smuggled into the town. The result was a sudden violent outbreak of cholera in the Jews' quarter, whence it speedily spread all around. The disease was of a very fatal type, and its deadly ravages caused a general exodus to the adjacent villages and mountain slopes. The deaths were believed to be from eighteen to twenty thousand. I heard of some cases among the Persian infantry guard of twelve men left at our Legation quarters in the city, and on going there to ascertain, I found that of four soldiers who had been attacked, three had died: the others remained at their post. The same steadiness was observed with all the military guards in the European quarter, and similarly the troops in garrison, always reduced to a minimum in summer during the absence of the Court and the Government, did not disperse in flight as might have been expected, but continued to do their duty. They, moreover, responded well to the call for help in removing and burying the dead. The excellent conduct of the troops was the outcome of the splendid example set by the Deputy-Governor of the city, the Vazir Iza Khan. He was very wealthy, and did much to relieve the sufferings and wants of the poor who were attacked by the disease: he remained in the town while the epidemic raged, and refused to seek safety in flight as some officials had done; but sad to say he fell a victim

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to cholera at the last, and his wife, who had continued with him throughout, died of the disease two days before him. I mention this specially with reference to the Persian soldier, who generally is as his leader, his superior, makes him.

And in support of this opinion I shall now relate the effect of a bad example which occurred at the same time, under exactly similar circumstances, at Astrabad on the Caspian coast, the head-quarter town of a Persian governorship, where cholera was also carried from Meshed. On the severity of the visitation becoming alarming, the Governor fled to Charbagh, a hill locality 30 miles distant, followed by all the officials, and thereupon the troops deserted and dispersed. Disorder prevailed in the town, and the lawless characters of the bazars robbed and wrecked the shops and dwellings of Russian subjects, they being the "strangers within the gate," and drove them to seek shelter in the Russian Consulate. There was no vestige of Government authority left: the Consul could see no sign of local protection, and he accordingly telegraphed an urgent call for help from the Russian Legation at Tehran, which, being unable to obtain prompt assistance from Persian sources, had recourse to Russian aid from Askhabad in the Trans-Caspian command, then under General Kuropatkin. A squadron of Cossack cavalry was at once railed to Krasnovodsk on the Caspian, and thence shipped by steamers to Ashurada, the port of Astrabad. There was no delay in their despatch and arrival, and the humour of the situation was pointed by the Cossacks being quartered in the Governor's palace, which, having been left open and unprotected on the headlong flight of its late occupants, was thus saved from the hand of the local spoiler. The Cossacks remained in Astrabad three weeks: the Russian Consul, with their assistance, restored order and confidence, and was practically the Governor of the town, and the

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inhabitants regretted the return of Persian rule. The Cossacks went back by land to Russian territory, advantage being taken of the opportunity to march right through the intervening Persian country, occupied by the Turkomans who owe a divided allegiance, according to the seasons when, as nomads, they move with their families and flocks from one side of the border to the other, for summer and winter pasture. As a foreseen consequence, the sight of this march and the news which accompanied it greatly increased Russian prestige on the Turkoman frontier.

Various reports were current among the foreign legations concerning this remarkable incident. One, a likely explanation as to the delay on the part of the Persian Government to make an early effort to restore order at Astrabad, was, that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had mislaid and forgotten the urgent representations from the Russian Legation, until the presence of the Cossacks in Astrabad became known to the Shah by a direct report. It was said that the Minister in question, being of leisurely and unmethodical habits, when transacting business and sitting in Oriental fashion on the carpeted floor, with his papers all about him *sur le tapis*, was accustomed to put away *sous le tapis* those that related to matters which required reference and consideration. He considered the Russian communications in question calling for immediate action to be such as required deliberate thought, and in the process of thinking the deliberation became delay. He continued to think over the matter, and doubtless smoked over it, and slept over it. The weather was warm, the Shah was away shooting in the mountains, cholera was all about, and there was much confusion everywhere; and in the meanwhile Russian interests at Astrabad had necessarily to be protected by Russian troops, owing to the disgraceful flight of the authorities and the garrison on the outbreak of cholera. Here the

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Persian soldier simply followed the example of those set in authority over him.

And now I come to speak of the Persian army and the Persian military system. The organisation is, theoretically, good, but it is never carried into effect except on paper. No one, from the Sipah-Salar (Commander-in-Chief) down to the Sarbaz (soldier), ever thinks of attempting to adhere to it. The Army administration is so bad, that for reform to have practical effect, thorough radical change in its character and management is absolutely necessary. The first essential is, regular pay to be guaranteed to the soldier by the Central Government, and the second is, honest officers. It may be said that while the Army system is good in theory, its practical excellence is directed towards the perfection of the pay accounts. This means that the best machinery is employed in the manufacture of accounts, and such is the intricate nature of these, and so powerful is the influence of those who benefit by them, that any attempt by a just and energetic War Minister to secure regular and honest payment to the soldier, would at once recoil upon himself by a strong combination being formed to defeat his efforts, and drive him from office. As in Civil life it is the peasant cultivator who has to pay for the luxuries of the governing class set in authority over him, so in the Army, the soldier is plundered to pay for the palaces and pleasures of those in high command. Great freedom of speech is permitted in Persia, and I heard very open remarks made concerning the manner in which the Army administration secures its personal profits. The speakers said that a perfect system of illegitimate payments centred in the War Office at Tehran, an office so well organised that complete tabulated information regarding every regiment is forthcoming if required; that there, regular muster-rolls of every corps are sent, and a crowd of clerks employed to examine and check

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the pay-sheets. The rules for issue of pay from the office of the Nizam-ul-Mulk (Paymaster-General) are elaborate and excellent in theory, but loose and bad in practice. There is generally a delay of some months in issuing the pay from the central office, and this favours the disinclination of high officials to pay promptly. They deem their own home demands sacred and preferential—the silken curtain of the harem comes before the standard of war. The regimental pay, as it passes through the various office channels, has to give toll according to the need, greed, and influence of those who control. A serjeant of an Azerbaijani Turk regiment said: "the tomăn (ten krans) is robbed of several krans before it reaches the soldier."

As fairly full information has been given by various writers regarding the composition, organisation, and distribution of the Persian army (notably in Curzon's work on Persia), I shall confine myself to notes and details wherewith to aid and amplify previous accounts. The artillery is an unimportant branch of the service as regards really efficient batteries: the men are excellent material, and under an honest system would become first-rate gunners. The country does not produce heavy draught horses, but there is a breed of stout small horses in Azerbaijan, showing a strong strain of good Northern blood, which would suit for field artillery purposes.

There is a comparatively small force of cavalry permanently under arms besides the Persian Cossack Brigade and the Shah's Body-guard. A certain number are maintained at each provincial centre for ceremonial and escort purposes, but bodies of tribal and irregular horse can generally be quickly embodied for special service. The numerous bodies of irregular horse, shown in the Persian army list, are organised and officered in some manner more or less equal to their simple requirements, and they seem to muster

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quickly and render willing service, when sudden necessity calls for their embodiment. Every Persian can ride well, and considering the great number of horses throughout the country, and the pride of arms in the classes from which the troops are drawn, it would be an easy matter to enroll, on very short notice, a large selection of good men and horses, well fitted for mounted infantry purposes. I advisedly say mounted infantry, for I feel certain, from what I have seen of the flower of the Persian cavalry (I saw three thousand five hundred on parade at Tehran), that they would not stand the shock of battle on equal terms, in a charge on or from our Indian cavalry. They are still the Parthians of old, and on horseback trust to the rifle. The irregular horsemen, who provide their own arms, are largely equipped with the Peabody-Martini rifle, which found its way into Persia in great numbers during and after the last Turko-Russian war, the result principally of Kurdish pillage in the Asia-Minor campaign, and purchases from Russian soldiers by the numerous Persians who accompanied the Russian army as sutlers. This rifle became the popular arm in Azerbaijan, Gilan, Irak, Kurdistan, and Luristan, and traders manage still, I believe, to do a good business in it and its cartridges, passing both freely into Persian from Turkish territory.

The seventy-nine territorial regiments of so-called regular infantry on the Persian establishment are a heavy charge to the State, with but little value in return as efficient fighting bodies. About one-third of this force is generally under arms, while the rest is on furlough half-pay at their homes. For the practical purposes of war they are the form without the force, the body without the backbone, and would probably fall to pieces on the first severe fight with well-trained troops. As at present administered, these regiments, while good enough to preserve the peace within the Persian borders,

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would be of little use against hostile neighbours. The material is excellent, and under an honest system of good treatment and regular pay they could very soon be worked into first-class rank and file. But it is hardly likely that an effective organisation of native growth will spring up to develop and utilise Persia's natural military resources. The late General Sir Henry Rawlinson, who served as an instructor and commanding officer in the Persian army, wrote in 1879:—

"Their are no people in the world who offer better rough material for military purposes than the Persians: the physique of the men is admirable, and their powers of endurance are great; their general intelligence and personal courage are beyond all praise. If the Persian material were placed at the disposal of a European power who would encourage and take care of the men, and develop their military instincts, a fine working army, very superior in my opinion to anything that Turkey could produce, might be obtained in a very short period of time."

Sir Henry had said previously, in a lecture at the Royal United Service Institution in 1858, that it was "impossible to avoid foreseeing that as any European war becomes developed in the East, the military resources of Persia must be called into action. In fact it seemed that we could not have a more formidable engine of attack and defence launched against India than a Persian army commanded by Russian officers. In the same way we could not have a more efficient instrument of defence than the same army led by British officers, or by officers acting in our interests." Sir Henry Rawlinson evidently regarded the actual military capabilities of Persia as likely to play some part in future political developments in the Middle East.

The strong body of troops of all arms which the eldest son of the late Shah organised at Isfahan, and

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GROUP OF PERSIAN OFFICERS, ISFAHAN ARMY, 1888.

Sevraguine photo.] [*To face page* 310.

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maintained there in an unusually efficient state for several years previous to 1889, showed what can be made of Persian soldiers under a fairly good system. His Royal Highness was supposed to be brooding over his supersession as Heir Apparent, and had recourse to "playing at soldiers" as a distraction. He went to work at his military amusement with such earnestness that he formed a "model army," which the Shah thought was too numerous and too good to be quite safe for the peace of the country. The leading spirit of this army was Karim Agha, a Kurd of Erzerūm —a man of great energy and natural ability, with strong military instincts—and as the necessary funds were forthcoming, he soon created a well-trained, well-equipped, and regularly paid force of all arms, ready to act at the call of the Prince Governor. Ambition and over-weening vanity led to imprudent talk among his partisans, and there was a popular idea of encouragement from Russia's great rival in Persia in the fact of the high decoration of Grand Commander of the Star of India being sent to the Prince in November 1887. There were rumours also of presents of arms and money accompanying the decoration, and this belief was firmly held by the Heir Apparent until I assured him to the contrary, at Tabriz, in the end of 1892.

The late Shah became jealous or suspicious of the Isfahan army in 1887, and advantage was taken of an opportunity which offered of giving him a Russian officer's opinion concerning it. This opportunity was probably one of design rather than chance. The captain of the Horse Artillery Battery attached to the Tehran Cossack Brigade had been on a journey to Southern Persia, and on the occasion of a review of the Tehran garrison by the Shah, he was presented to His Majesty as having lately returned from Isfahan. The Shah, never a critical observer of soldiers, was

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always well pleased with his own, and he confidently asked the Russian officer if he had seen any troops in the south equal to what had just passed in review. The discreet but telling reply was that the Prince Governor of Isfahan had a very efficient body of troops under his command, and the Shah became an interested listener to the captain's description of what he had seen. Curiosity and suspicion having been aroused, the Shah summoned from Tabriz a European officer attached to the Heir Apparent's Court, who had long been in his service, and whom he thoroughly trusted, and sent him to Isfahan to bring back a true report. The Prince Governor had made himself fully acquainted with the object in view, but such was his self-assurance that he went out of his way to openly recognise the officer's mission, and to magnify the importance of what had impressed competent observers, with the result that his pride had a severe fall. The Shah was then contemplating the lengthened tour in Europe which he made in 1889, and doubtless thought that the Isfahan army might become a danger to the Regent during his absence: he therefore ordered the reduction of the troops composing it to the moderate limits really required for provincial purposes, and further directed the well-filled arsenal to be emptied of much of its stores. The son was constrained to submit to his father, and being forbidden his military hobby, he turned his mind to the means of making money, with such success, that he is now credited with having amassed a considerable fortune, which is safely invested in foreign securities.

Whatever drill, or discipline, or efficiency is still found in the soldiers of the Shah, may be said to have sprung from the seeds which were so laboriously sown for thirty years in the early part of last century, by the exertions of English officers. It is interesting in a way to know that the right company of infantry regiments is still

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PERSIAN INFANTRY, ISFAHAN ARMY, 1888.

Sevraguine photo.] [*To face page* 312.

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known as "Bahaduran," corresponding to "Grenadiers," and the left as "Mukhbiran," the Scouts, meaning the "Light Company"—the skirmishers—after the old manner of our infantry. And as a curiosity I observed that they had retained, and applied in their own way, what was taught of the funeral exercise in reversing arms at the halt, as I noticed in the month of Moharram, when Shiah Mahomedans mourn Hussein, the martyred head of their faith, that the military guards piled arms with the muzzles downward. What may be called the present military system of Persia was introduced by Abbas Mirza, the son of Fateh Ali Shah (great grandfather of the present Shah), and Governor of Azerbaijan, who had English officers of the East India Company's army as instructors for his troops, one of whom was the late General Sir Henry Rawlinson. Abbas Mirza[1] spent much pains and money on his regular troops, whom he fondly hoped would some day chase the Russians from Tiflis; but Paskievitch's campaigns of 1827 and 1828 dissipated his hopes, and brought the Russians to Erivan. Sir John Malcolm, who was ambassador from the East India Company to Abbas Mirza's father, vainly tried to dissuade the Prince from raising regular troops, pointing out to him that the revenues of the country were insufficient for their maintenance in a state of efficiency; that from want of good officers he could never make them equal to the Russians; and that the irregular cavalry, which was the chief strength of Persia, would probably be neglected to provide for the new levies. And afterwards a Russian officer, who served in Paskievitch's campaigns, said that it was "an easy matter fighting the Persians now, to what it was in the last war (1809): then," he said, "we never knew what it was to rest. The Persian cavalry was ubiquitous, and it was no

[1] Article on "Army Organisation among Oriental Nations," by Colonel F. H. Tyrrell, 14th Madras Infantry.

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use trying to bring them to a fair fight: they were here to-day and gone to-morrow. Now we sleep at our ease, and can always find their army when we want it." Abbas Mirza would not listen to Sir John Malcolm's words of wisdom, but time has proved their worth. The splendid and numerous irregular cavalry which Persia possessed in the last century (eighteenth) is a thing of the past, and instead of it she has a poor imitation of a European standing army, badly officered, badly equipped, badly paid, and badly organised. The great want of the Persian army is that of all Oriental armies—an efficient and trustworthy body of officers. (This remark cannot, of course, apply to the Japanese.)

In 1890 the late Shah spoke of measures to encourage and increase the tribal horse contingents and the irregular cavalry, which had been somewhat neglected, also to substitute militia battalions for some of the regular infantry regiments; but His Majesty's proposals took no definite shape, and the national forces are at present what they were then. There is a considerable number of irregular levies—horse, foot, and in certain districts, "camel-men"—under various territorial designations, all rated as "Cherik" (militia) under tribal organisation. Among these the Kurdistan levies form a really good force, armed with breech-loading rifles; they probably turn out as mounted infantry. There is ample evidence to show that, notwithstanding long deferred and much reduced payment, the Persian military service is really popular. The military instinct is strong among the people, and they take a pride in belonging to the national army. As an instance of this, I here quote from a report I wrote at Tehran in 1890:—

"The Sangur Kuliai tribe in the Kirmanshah district used to furnish a corps of five hundred irregular cavalry, and a regiment of infantry. The late Governor, for some grave misconduct on their part, punished the

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tribe by disbanding these corps, which, however, are still shown in the Provincial Government books, and their pay is annually provided for. The loss to the tribe of this service is regarded by themselves and others as a disgrace, and has much affected its importance. They would gladly come forward again if called to arms."

The Persian Cossack Brigade was first formed in 1878 under Austrian officers, who took over as a nucleus the "Mahajir" Cossacks, men who, as the word implies, were refugees from Russian territory. They were dressed and equipped as Russian Cossacks, and received somewhat higher pay than the Persian cavalry. The Austrian officers left at the end of their three years' service contract in 1880, the usual difficulties in regular issue of pay causing dissatisfaction to them and their men. It was said that a question then arose as to the necessity of European officers for the brigade, but experience soon showed that the Mahajir element was not so well controlled by the Persian as by the foreign officer. Arrangements were accordingly made through the Russian Legation for Russian officers, which at first the Mahajirs were inclined to resent, declaring that having become refugees to escape from the Russians, it was impossible for them to serve under the new officers. But when it became known that the change brought with it an engagement on the part of the Government to issue the pay punctually, they hesitated to leave a corps where they were well treated, and finally decided to remain, with the result that they found every reason to be well contented with their Russian officers. In the new contract the stipulation had necessarily to be made for the regular issue of pay to the brigade, and under the powerful protection of the Russian Legation, the commandant is able to take his own measures to produce and issue the pay of all ranks on pay day, when it is not forthcoming from the Persian

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Government. The old habits of unpunctuality and deferred payment almost always prevail in the Paymaster-General's office to compel the commandant to exercise his power to borrow from the banks, in order to fulfill his engagements to the men, and in course of time, the Government has to repay both capital and interest. The Persian Treasury, however, has been better supplied of late, and the Cossack Brigade pay may now be more punctually provided. There can be no doubt of the keen military spirit created and fostered by the Russian officers in this brigade, and of the readiness with which the men would spring to obey their Polkovnik (Colonel). Deprived of their foreign officers, they would speedily deteriorate. A proof of this was given in 1888, during the Yamut Turkoman disturbances in the Astrabad district. As the Persian troops were being sorely beaten on all occasions by the Yamuts, the Government arranged to despatch three hundred of the Cossacks as a reinforcement and an encouragement to their own regular troops. It was contrary to Russian policy on the Turkoman frontier to take part against the Yamuts, and accordingly the Legation interfered to prevent Russian officers accompanying the detachment. The Cossacks proceeded without their Russian leaders, and the result was that they shared in the general defeat.

The Persian military system is interlaced with the provincial land taxation system in a very intimate manner, and I shall here attempt to explain the connection. Soldiers are raised from each district for the territorial regiments in proportion to the taxation. In the Faridan district, for example, each payer of ten tomans (the toman was formerly equal to seven shillings) in taxes has to provide one soldier, and pay him from three to four tomans in cash, and one kharvar weight (600 lbs.) of corn annually, whether on duty or on half-pay at home, in order to induce him to

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take up military service. When the village has no single tax-payer of ten tomans, the amount is divided up into ten one toman sections, and the individuals making up the total payment have to combine to bring about the desired end. Colonel and soldier all get this village money and grain allowance on the same scale, without any difference on account of rank. This means equality of all in liability to serve or provide a substitute, and may be called conditional conscription. Different localities pay different sums on this account, but the average is about five tomans. The actual amount of the cash payment varies according to the wealth of the locality, and the dearth or otherwise of candidates for military service. The soldiers of the Derejgin regiment, for instance, receive from one to one and a half tomans, while those of the Sedeh or Jelali regiment get twenty tomans, the price of labour in the locality governing the amount. In Azerbaijan there are places where fifty tomans are paid, and in the Isfahan district, one hundred has been known to be paid. This annual payment (which is subject to revision) is in addition to the 600 lbs. of corn given annually, representing a supply of flour or meal to leave at home in order to enable the soldier to absent himself from his family, of which he may be the only breadwinner.

If the regiment has been mobilised, half the soldier's pay is paid locally to his family, and half to himself at the place where he is stationed. Thus the pay of the Faridan regiment is provided for in the Isfahan budget, and the Government of Isfahan debits the Faridan deputy farmer of the taxes with the amount in his accounts, Faridan being the place where the regiment was raised, and this place of origin is always charged with the payment of half the soldiers' pay, which charge is met from the local revenues. Whether the soldier is on service or at home, the Faridan

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deputy farmer of the revenues should pay him the moiety of his pay chargeable on the revenues, and as the officers and soldiers are all payers of land revenue, this half-pay is accounted for under that head. The other moiety of pay is made over to the soldier at the place where he is serving with the regiment. This system applies to all ranks from the colonel to the soldier. The general rule of service for the regiment is the proportion of one year's duty on full pay to two of furlough at home on half-pay. Under this Army system there are no State pensions to officers or soldiers, although there is a very remarkable gratuitous pension system, which I shall mention later. Besides his pay, the soldier, from the day he leaves his home on duty, receives a daily ration of 3 lbs. of corn in addition to the grant to his family. The officers also receive rations and forage allowances whilst on duty.

The moblisation of a regiment is a great opportunity for money-making after the manner of the Persian official. Suppose a regiment is summoned for duty in Khorasan; the colonel, accompanied by his deputy, the lieutenant-colonel, proceeds to the territorial head-quarters (where the paymaster always resides, busy with his muster-rolls and pay-sheets), and begins the operations necessary for assembling his men. Those who have means, and to whom the summons is inconvenient, bribe the colonel to exempt them from service, or else to allow them to send a substitute. Sometimes the soldier pays the colonel to obtain his complete discharge. When this is done, the colonel makes a demand for a substitute, but the locality has to pay a sum of money to the colonel to obtain his consent to the substitution, although he accepted the arrangement by private bargain with the retiring soldier, without the participation of those who are called upon to pay for his consent to the substitution.

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The consent may cost from five to one hundred tomans, according to the locality. It happens sometimes, even often, that out of a strength of eight hundred men, two hundred obtain their discharge in this manner, and the various localities have to pay "consent" to a similar number being substituted to replace them. Another source of profit to the colonel is the item "desertions and deaths," for which consent to substitution has also to be paid. "This is a tune," my informant said, when speaking of these golden opportunities, "upon which the colonel can play any variation; the greater an artist he is, the greater the harvest he reaps." When all these matters are settled, the regiment is marched to the provincial depot for uniforms, tents, and arms. If an inspection is made, substitutes for absentees are hired, or obtained with the friendly assistance of another regimental commanding officer. It is well understood that officers help one another on such occasions. Thus the colonel of the Derejgin regiment would ask the colonel of the Ferahan regiment for the loan of two hundred men in order to bring his corps up to "inspection strength."

The men arrange for their own transport by clubbing together to purchase donkeys, which are very useful also in their foraging expeditions off the line of march. When finally started for their station, those men, who have provided themselves with funds to support applications for permission to return to their homes on "urgent private affairs," approach the colonel discreetly, through the serjeants and captains, and obtain leave of absence. The company officers and serjeants, who as a rule all belong to the same localities as their men, always participate in the payments which pass from the soldier to the colonel. The section "vakil" (serjeant) is an important rank in the company. There are four

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in each company, and they work direct with the "sultan" (captain); the "naib" (lieutenant) is of no account if not in command, and the work is simplified by dealing with the vakils, who are in immediate touch with the men. The word "vakil" implies importance, as it is used to denote any rank or position from ambassador to factor: a person skilled in any business, pleader or spokesman. Vakil-ed-Dowleh, Agent of the State, is a high official rank in Persia. Accordingly, the Persian soldier makes a point of conciliating his serjeant when he desires to obtain a favour from his captain or colonel. He trusts him more than his officer, and always associates with his comrades to employ one to secure the home half-pay being paid to his family when he is absent with the regiment. The officers know very little about drill when first called out for service, as there is no annual mustering or training when the corps is not embodied, but they soon learn the little that is required of them from the officer instructor, trained at the military college at Tehran, who is sent to join the regiment on the mobilisation order being issued.

When the regiment reaches its destination, the routine regulation is that it should be inspected by the Governor, who will see that pay and rations are issued in accordance with the muster-roll of men present. If the Governor is a man of strong character, he retains for himself the money represented by the difference between the number of men actually present and the number which should be present; but if he is weak, the colonel pockets the difference. Generally speaking, they go into brotherly partnership over the profit, and share it equally between them. After this perfunctory inspection, the regiment is usually split up into small parties, and distributed in the villages and districts on nominal guard and garrison duty. There the men provide well for themselves

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at the expense of the "rayat" (cultivator), and often become so well off that they do not care to ask for their service pay or rations, which become the perquisites of the officers. If the soldier under these circumstances finds the villagers submissive, he plunders them, but if unable to do this, he hires out his services as a labourer, or becomes a shopkeeper, butcher, or usurer. The money changers' stalls in the towns seem by prescriptive right to belong to soldiers, who are generally recognisable as such by some portion of their dress. They lend small sums at a monthly rate of interest equal to 120 per cent. per annum, and appear to have the privilege of beating defalcating debtors, their comrades making common cause with them on such occasions. These soldiers are a thrifty people, and they often return to their villages when the regimental term of service is over, well contented with their earnings. They all combine to have representatives in their villages to see that the local half-pay to which they are entitled is given to their families, and this helps to maintain a certain popularity of military service in the country districts. It is a characteristic feature of this weak administration which permits such irregularities, that the peculations are practised on the soldier only—the officer, even the lowest in rank, can take care of himself, for though obliged to wait long for his pay, he generally gets a share of perquisites which produce ready money.

What I have here stated is perhaps an extreme case of irregularities on the mobilisation of an infantry regiment, but I believe they often happen more or less as described. I am aware that the attention of the Persian Government has been directed for some time past to the glaring faults of their military administration and system, but the Shah knows well that reform, to be sure and certain, must be slow and gradual;

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for change in Persia, with its old ways and long memories, cannot be effected at one stroke. The Shah's Government has carried out successfully and advantageously for the State the abolition of the farming system in the Customs Department, and they are now engaged on much-needed reform in the system of national finance which is not only ruinous, but absolutely hinders progress and prosperity. There have been several changes of Prime Ministers since the present Shah came to the throne, but this has not interrupted the movement towards reform. The three last holders of the office of Grand Vazir, covering, up to date, ten years, have all been "progressives." The first of these, the Amin-ed-Dowleh, began a system of financial reform which, however, had no chance of success, owing to the want of capable assistants. The second, the able and sagacious Atabeg Ali Asghar Khan, conspicuous by his energy and talent, carried through most successfully the valuable Customs reform, which in some degree has provided a Treasury worthy of the name; and the third, who is now in office, the Ayn-ed-Dowleh, a statesman of strong character and good ability, has already proved himself to be a determined reformer. He enjoys much influence with the Shah, and thus strengthened and supported should be able to overcome any opposition to his policy of gradual reform in the finances and administration.

A late member of the Persian Government once said to me that the curse of their financial system was the army of "mustaufis" (controllers of accounts), who fed upon the finances, and ate up the substance of the country. He spoke of the crowd of these artful plunderers who infested the Government offices, and ingratiated themselves with officials by becoming intermediaries for the embezzlement of public money. He said they had a system of correspondence with all the

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provincial offices, and worked upon the influences which lead to corrupt practices and baneful patronage. I have already alluded to the intricate mode of accounts in the head offices at Tehran, which is calculated to puzzle reformers, and drive them away from the path of knowledge. One of the richest fields for the mustaufi to work in is that of the permanent State pensions or annuities, granted to favoured individuals from provincial revenues, without the pretence even of work done for the State, and carrying with them no service or obligation. These are simply Royal gifts to favourites, and sometimes appear in the form of an order to pay from a source unnamed, until an opportunity of doing so is created or found. Mustaufis studied the revenue returns and ascertained what provinces could bear further burdens of this nature, and in course of time every available source of income was fully drained. Then came the time when vacancies had to be sought for, thus appreciating the ever vigilant mustaufis' opportunities of assisting hungry candidates, who possessed influence to over-ride the expectations and so-called claims of others. Though the provincial revenues are much burdened with these annuities, yet there is no tendency to lessen them, as a brisk business is carried on between candidates and influential officials, by which the former, in competition, offer to accept less than the assigned amount, and even forego the first few years' payment. The result is a shrinkage of the surplus revenues payable to the Central Treasury, and thus the absolute necessity to preserve some balance has compelled an enquiry into the authenticity of the provincial payments to the annuitants shown in the accounts. The Finance Minister's deputy, M. Naus, the clever Belgian official who helped to carry out the Customs' reform, is now engaged on these pension lists, and has his agents at the head-quarters of each provincial government, examining the titles to the annuities and verifying

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the existence and identity of those who receive them. This is but the first step in financial reform, for there is much room for improvement throughout each provincial administration.

Of course, what is now being done, touching as it does the individual interests of an army of officials and mustaufis, favourites and drones, has already drawn forth a great cry against the Grand Vazir, who heads the party of progress, but there is no reason to fear that the Government will turn aside from its purpose. The present Shah is anxious for Army reform, and knows that reform of the finances must come first.

The investigation of grants, pensions, and annuities, now being conducted in Persia, reminds me of the "Inām" Commission in the Bombay Presidency about forty years ago, when the land revenue returns were being revised, and enquiry was made into inām grants, the holders and owners of which were called upon to produce and prove their titles. "Inām" means a gift or present, and inām lands were free from taxation. There was much agitation raised in the vernacular press against this "act of the oppressor," and some sympathisers in England took up the cry against the Indian Government for instituting the investigation after a long lapse of time. There was a story of an enterprising M.P., who, in the course of conducting independent enquiry in India on this subject, had occasion to make a journey by the indigenous "doolie" or palki mode of travelling, with relays of bearers: he was ignorant of the language, and also of the custom of "bakhshish," under the name of inām (which is the word so used in Bombay), when one set of bearers gives way to another at the end of each stage. He noted that when he left them they held up their hands in an attitude of supplication, and ran after him calling out "Inām, inām," and he believed this meant that even the poor palki bearers joined in the popular cry against the

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unjust Inām Commission. The story went that he afterwards made a statement to this effect in England. Of course the poor palki men, being disappointed of their customary inām bakhshish, ran after him begging for it.

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CHAPTER XII

(1892-1902)

I HAD now made the acquaintance of most of the prominent Ministers and persons about the Shah, and in and out of his government, and desiring to meet the Vali Ahd (Heir Apparent), Governor-General of the important province of Azerbaijan, it was arranged that I should pay His Imperial Highness a complimentary visit on the part of H.B.M.'s Minister, and travel *viâ* Persian Kurdistan and the Turkish frontier to Tabriz, the Vali Ahd's provincial capital. Of course the Shah had to be fully informed of my proposed visit to the Heir Apparent, as from the invariable Eastern point of view suspicion generally lurks in the mind of the sovereign towards his prospective successor. Sir Frank Lascelles had occasion to have audience of the Shah on 23rd September (1892), and advantage was taken of the opportunity to present me, previous to my departure. His Majesty asked me what was the object of my journey, and I mentioned all frankly, to see Kurdistan and Lake Urmia, and to have the honour of visiting the Vali Ahd at Tabriz. I also said that when the journey was over at Tabriz, I was returning to England, on my duty with the Legation coming to an end. The Shah, on hearing this, expressed his regret at my leaving the Legation. I may here say that the Turkish Ambassador, Khalil Bey, on my farewell visit to him, gave expression to the same feeling of regret. I had as a companion on

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this journey the Nawab Hassan Ali Khan, C.I.E., who was attached to the Legation in Tehran, and I greatly benefited by his knowledge of Persia and the Persians, and his agreeable society.

We left Tehran on the 6th October 1892, and, travelling by the well-known Tabriz high road, reached Zenjan, a little over 200 miles, on the 15th *idem*. On the 16th we visited the Ihtisham-u-Dowleh, cousin of the Shah and Governor of Khamseh, who then resided at Zenjan. We found him suffering from two bullet wounds lately received in an attempt to arrest Jehan Shah Khan, chief of the Afshar section of the powerful Shahsevend ("Shah's Own") tribe. I have previously mentioned that the Shah can raise whomsoever he chooses from the lowest to the highest position, except in the powerful military tribes, where the nomination to chieftainship is confined to the elders of the leading families, who generally represent two lines from one head, one being in opposition while the other is in power. The wild tribesmen, however, who in feudal fashion attach themselves as eager partisans to a popular leader, are sometimes disinclined to accept his fall from favour without an appeal to arms. But the Royal authority prevails in the end, and the new chief's rule begins, and lasts just so long as Fortune smiles, and the Shah wills.

A marked instance of this was shown when the Governor proceeded to carry out the Shah's order to arrest Jehan Shah Khan, and send him as a prisoner to Tehran. The ostensible cause of the chief's removal from power was, that with his own hand he had killed his wife, the sister of his cousin, Rahmat-ulla-Khan, who was known to be his rival in the tribe. Jehan Shah had unjustly accused her of being unfaithful to him, and going to her tent, he called her out, and, notwithstanding that she appeared before him with a copy of the sacred Koran in her hand, he shot her dead

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while in the act of swearing on the holy book that she was innocent. The matter was reported to the Shah, then in camp in Irak, who ordered Jehan Shah to be deprived of the chieftainship, and Rahmat-ulla-Khan to be appointed in his place. The Governor of Khamseh, in which province Jehan Shah was then located with his clan, was directed to carry out the Royal command. Much telegraphing had taken place on the subject, and as cypher was not used, Jehan Shah, by the use of money and influence, was able to obtain the fullest information of all that passed, and as he was known to have a numerous personal following armed with breech-loading rifles, the Governor was instructed to act with caution. He accordingly had recourse to silly stratagem, and gave out that the object of his journey to the tribal head-quarters was to coerce a section of the clan which had been giving trouble. He therefore asked Jehan Shah to assist him, and this gave the chief a good excuse for assembling his men. The Prince Governor took with him one hundred cavalry and four hundred infantry, but no attention was paid to the ammunition, and they started without a proper supply.

Rahmat-ulla-Khan was fully aware of the Governor's real intentions, but the influence and power of the popular chief prevented any opposition partisan gathering against him. He therefore could only depend upon the Persian troops who accompanied the Governor to enforce the order of the Shah, and was unable to do more than prepare a reception tent and provide a luncheon for the Prince and his people, a few miles in advance of their camp, at the place appointed for the meeting with himself and Jehan Shah. On approaching this place, these two, with the elders and the tribesmen, went forward for the customary ceremonial reception of the Governor; Jehan Shah dismounted and saluted with the utmost

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show of respect, but on reaching the tent which had been prepared for them by his rival, he declined to enter and partake of his hospitality, declaring that he preferred to pass on to his own tents, a short distance off, his mounted following of fifteen hundred men accompanying him. The Governor knew that Jehan Shah had become dangerous from the devotion of his well-armed followers, and the readiness of the main body of the tribesmen to support him. He had evidently contemplated his arrest and seizure at the place of meeting, but the show of force and feeling in Jehan Shah's favour was too strong to admit of the attempt being made. He therefore decided to declare openly the object of his coming, and after lunch he assembled the elders of the tribe, and summoned Jehan Shah to his presence, who, however, declined to obey. The Prince, on being told this, announced his deposition, and the appointment of Rahmat-ulla-Khan in his place, showing at the same time the Shah's written command. He then appears to have indulged in some violent personal abuse of Jehan Shah, and again sent an order to secure his presence.

In the meanwhile, that chief had taken counsel with his tribal following, and finding them entirely on his side, and determined to dispute the rule of his rival, he served out cartridges freely, and went to discuss the matter with the Governor. He left most of his men at some distance, and presented himself, attended by only a few. The Prince informed him of the Shah's command, and after some contentious talk, he held out the Royal "firman" for him or any of those with him to read. On one of the elders moving forward to take the paper, Jehan Shah suddenly motioned them all back with his hands, and the Prince, taking alarm at this appearance of a signal, called out to his guards to seize Jehan Shah. There was a shout and a rush,

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and some of Jehan Shah's men from behind fired over the heads of the soldiers, who, however, returned the fire point blank, killing and wounding several of the Shahsevends. The tribesmen then opened fire in earnest, and the Prince, with his troops, promptly fled. All ran and rode for their lives, pursued by the furious enemy. Some of the servants kept with their master, the Prince, and remounted him twice when the horses he rode were shot. The tribesmen made him a special target, for he was most conspicuous in rich dress, and a third time he and his horse were rolled over together, he receiving two bullet wounds. He was then seized, partially stripped, and treated with great indignity. The pursuit was kept up to his camp, which was captured and plundered; thirty-five of his men were killed, and fifty wounded. One of the Prince's officials, also wounded, was taken with him, and both were kept prisoners for three days.

A few days later, Jehan Shah, having recovered from his mad fury, trembled at the recollection of his crime, and dreading the vengeance which he knew was certain to follow, he packed up his valuables and fled with a few followers to the Caspian coast. He had the intention to escape by steamer to Baku, but, failing in this, owing to all communication with Russian territory having been suspended during the outbreak of cholera then prevailing, he determined to make his way by land across the northern frontier. Being closely pursued by a party of Persian cavalry, he abandoned all his baggage, and with great difficulty reached Tabriz, where he took sanctuary in the house of the chief moulla. He died there after enduring existence for about six months, under circumstances, and with surroundings, which must have been supremely hateful to him. I was at Tabriz while he was there, and was told by one who had seen him that he was a sad sight then, the hereditary head of

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the Afshar Shahsevends, a section of a Royal tribe, herding in misery with a crowd of criminals who had sought sanctuary in order to escape the avenger of blood. On the first news of the occurrence, the Shah ordered the immediate mobilisation of the Khamseh and Kazvin regiments, and this had the effect of dispersing the tribesmen, facilitating the work of retribution, and establishing the power of the new chief. The incident had the best political result in aiding the Shah's policy of breaking up the ruling families, and the cohesion of the dangerous tribes, and asserting fully the authority of the Central Government. Jehan Shah had gradually strengthened his position by increasing the superior armament of his tribesmen (who were said to have three thousand breech-loaders) and laying in a large supply of cartridges, so that with his wealth, influence, and popularity, he must have been regarded as dangerously powerful. No doubt the conceited confidence thus produced led him to indulge in the ungovernable rage which wrecked his freedom and ended his life. The tribesmen said that the wife whom he killed was truly innocent; but, being themselves men of wild ways and tempestuous tempers, they thought he had been harshly judged, and they therefore stood by him to resist his seizure and deportation. Before the final settlement was arrived at these tribesmen must have suffered many penalties for armed resistance to the Shah's authority, besides paying heavy demands for blood money and death dues.

The opportunity which the suddenness of this incident offered to Jehan Shah was one which, had he possessed the spirit and self-reliance of the famous Nadir Shah (himself at his first start in life a "free lance" and simple trooper of the same tribe), might have lodged him in a palace instead of a prison. The capital at that time had a mere nominal garrison, the

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Shah having taken away most of the troops to swell his escort in camp, over 200 miles distant. The Shahsevend tribe numbers many thousand mounted fighting men, all born, bold robbers, and the tribe ranges as far as Tehran. Had Jehan Shah, when he found himself irretrievably committed, and his life forfeited by what had occurred, determined to play a desperate game, and make for the capital, he might have galloped there with all the fighting Shahsevends at his back, and made himself master of the city, the palace, and the treasury.

We left Zenjan on the 17th, and travelling west, reached Chiragh Tapeh, in the Afshar district, a distance of 85 miles, on the 21st. We passed safely through what was then known as a robber-infested country, but our guides from stage to stage were our passports of immunity from the attentions of "gentlemen of the road." A well-armed party of these met us one day, and in passing said to our guides: "If you hadn't been here there would have been a chance for us." But against this, our host that night, a big burly man, called Sarmast Khan (Mad-head), said that to rob a Firangi who was under the Shah's protection meant the whole country being harried, and accordingly the foreign traveller is comparatively safe. He told me that he had eight sons as big and strong as himself, but they were all away from home at that time. We heard the next day that Sarmast Khan and his sons were all noted robbers. That day six Kurds, well mounted, and armed with Martini rifles, rode up to us, but made no show of molesting us or troubling our caravan when they saw our guides and ascertained who we were. Near Chiragh Tapeh is the Takht-i-Suliman, a ruined fort of very ancient date, which local tradition describes as one of Solomon's royal residences that was shared by his Queen, Belgis of Sheba, whose summer throne

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is also shown on a mountain-top above. The ruin encloses a flowing geyser of tepid sea-green water (66°), 170 feet deep. Near it is the Zindan-i-Suliman (Solomon's dungeon), an extinct geyser 350 feet deep. It is now a massive cinter cone standing right up in the plain, 440 feet high. The surrounding country is of an average elevation of 6,000 feet. Here we were in an ancient volcanic region, covered with the *débris* of vast cinter cones which had been shattered and scattered by a mighty convulsion when the great geysers boiled up and burst their walls. The district was visited and fully described long ago by Sir Henry Rawlinson, and a later account of it was published by Mr Theodore Bent, who went there in 1889.

On the 22nd I visited the scene of the cinnabar[1] mining operations, 5 miles from Chiragh Tapeh, in a gorge of the hills, at an elevation of 8,300 feet. I saw there at work four Cornish miners and sinkers, with four other European employees of the Persian Mines Corporation, all under the able management of Mr David Ferguson, Mining Engineer. After lengthened laborious search throughout this quicksilver district, Mr Ferguson traced signs of cinnabar up to the gorge, where I found the party established, and commenced regular shaft and gallery mining operations. He appeared to have nearly reached the cinnabar vein, towards which the Arab miners had unsuccessfully laboured with great gangs of men seven or eight hundred years before. The mining work was being carried on night and day, in three shifts of eight hours each. The Kurd and Turk labourers were said to work well, and the employment was most popular with them by reason of good and regular pay. I had several washings made from earth

[1] Cinnabar, native sulphide of mercury, the only commercial source of the metal and its compound. The particles I saw washed out were rich reddish brown in colour.—T. E. G.

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taken in the galleries in my presence, and cinnabar appeared in each. Close to the same spot there is a mine of sulphide of arsenic which has long been worked for the Hamadan market, whence the mineral is sent all over the East, being in demand for "hummam" (bath), and plaster and painting purposes. There are other mines of "zirnakh" (Türki for sulphide of arsenic) in Persia, but this one produces the best. The next day I went to Kiz-Kapon, 15 miles off, to see other workings of the Mines Company. Here had been found pure mercury, but on discovering the location of the ore near Chiragh Tapeh the miners and establishment were moved there. All these operations came to end shortly after my visit, the Company deciding to cease work, as they were disappointed, like their Arab predecessors, in not finding quickly what they had traced by clear signs up to its mountain source.

The Mining Company's European employees were very popular with the people by reason of their fair and liberal dealings. I saw decided proof of the confidence which the labourers and suppliers of material had in the manager and his subordinates, when a strong demand was made by the headmen of villages concerned that all payments should pass through their hands. A noisy discussion ended in a hot dispute, and a threat to boycott the Firangis in their enterprise, signifying that the supply of labour and material required in the mining operations would be checked. The quarrel was summarily settled by the villagers themselves, who assembled to declare by unanimous vote that they desired no change in the direct dealings with their employers, and that while willing to give a small commission to the village heads, they insisted on maintaining the existing working arrangements. I was a witness to this interesting declaration of "free trade" by the Labour Party in a community of Turks and Kurds on the Perso-Turkish

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frontier. I had further evidence of the miners' popularity in the neighbourhood when, two days later, I gave an old blind beggarman a two-kran silver piece. He was so astonished at this that he admiringly said to the Kurd guides and others with me: "Is he a 'Hakim' (Governor)? Or is he a Firangi 'madanchi' (miner)?" I answered, "No, I am a Firangi traveller," and he responded, "Blessings on the Firangis."

From Chiragh Tapeh we passed on to Tabriz by the Kurdistan frontier and Lake Urmia, through a well-inhabited and open country, rich in pasturage and cultivation. We met many fine fellows, Kurds and others, and enjoyed their simple hospitality. They were glad, they said, to meet a Firangi gentleman to whom they could talk freely. The following explains. I had ridden ahead of the party, and halted at a Kurd village to await their arrival, as it seemed a convenient place for breakfast. The village headman and some of his people sat with me under a tree, and we talked freely. On the Nawab joining me a short time after, I heard our Kurd host ask him quietly what military rank I held (he had noticed my field service khaki tunic with shoulder badges). On being told "Amir Toman," he said: "Ya Allah! and here he came unattended, and has been talking in the most friendly manner with us. Had a Persian Amir Toman come, we would all have been off to the hills." We found many of the villages in the Maragha district, near the Urmia Lake, largely tenanted by soldiers, chiefly artillerymen. We were told that the profession had become hereditary in some families, from which soldiers and substitutes were always forthcoming when wanted, as the high price of labour in the province produced a good annual payment from the villages under the system I have already described. It was at Maragha that D'Arcy Todd and the other English officers serving

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with the Persian army over seventy years ago, collected and trained their gunners. The Peabody-Martini rifle shows largely in that quarter, as elsewhere on and near the Perso-Turkish frontier, the armed men generally carrying that weapon and a well-filled cartridge belt.

The Shiah pilgrim route from the north to holy Kerbela passes along the Kurdish frontier, and when travelling on it for several days we met many bands of Circassians and other Mahomedans from the Caucasus, journeying to that sacred Shiah Shrine in Turkish Arabia. They were almost all big men of good appearance and ruddy complexion, well clothed, well armed, and well mounted. They showed comfortable circumstances, and a pleasant independent bearing, indicating happy home life. Each band was "personally conducted" by a professional "Chaüsh," an organiser, who arranged the whole of their proceedings, and they appeared to march along the route as a well-ordered compact body, capable of giving a strong reply to armed attack. The Kurds are of the Sunni faith, and with the fanatical hatred ever existing towards the Shiah, who is regarded as an accursed heretic, there must have been much incitement in old days to rob and murder the pilgrims who are well known to be provided with gold for religious offerings, and the expenses of a long journey to and fro. And notwithstanding that the Shiah kingdom of Persia has been strong enough for a long time past to give the fullest protection within its limits, yet the old organisation for self-defence is maintained, and both Persia and Turkey allow these armed bands of foreign pilgrims to pass unchallenged through their territories. The men whom I met showed a consciousness of superiority in being under foreign protection while travelling in Persia. I said to one of them, a man of fair complexion, who took off his great sheepskin busby in

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A KURDISH LADY, SOUJ BULAK, PERSIAN KURDISTAN.

Sevraguine photo.] [*To face page* 336.

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salutation to me after the European fashion, "Are you Russian?" and he answered with an earnest "Yes, praise be to God!"

After a very interesting journey, we reached Tabriz on 3rd November, and were honoured with an audience of His Imperial Highness the Vali Ahd, on the 5th. Circumstances had tended to increase the Prince's natural shyness, and I thought him nervous at first, but, on addressing the Nawab as interpreter, and being answered by myself direct in Persian, his apparent nervousness disappeared, and he talked freely with me. In the conversation which followed, I mentioned much in a discreet manner concerning life at the capital, which seemed interesting to him. I had the opportunity to observe the pleasing characteristics which distinguish him, and signs of the tact which kept him free from all disagreement with the Central Government. He had always been successful in keeping clear of everything that could offend the susceptibilities of his Royal father, and was ever regarded as a dutiful son and a loyal subject.

Among the great families of Tartary from whom the chiefs of the Royal Kajar tribe claim descent, much importance has always been given to the birth of the mother of a candidate for high position. Therefore, in the choice of an heir to the throne, Persia, as now represented by the Kajar dynasty, looks to the claims of the mother as well as the father, and requires Royal birth on both sides. For this reason Mozuffer-ed-Din Mirza, the second son of the late Shah, his mother being a Kajar princess, was preferred to the firstborn, Sultan Masud Mirza, known as the Zil-es-Sultan. It was customary with the Kajars to have the Vali Ahd, or Heir Apparent, at a distance from the capital, and for him to be nominal Governor-General of Azerbaijan, the richest and most important province of Persia. The mother of the Vali Ahd maintained a

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dignified position of high influence at the Court of the late Shah until her death, which took place at Tehran in May 1892. During the intrigues and disquieting rumours which at one time prevailed, the strong influence of the mother of Mozuffer-ed-Din was always present to watch over his interests in the Shah's palace, and when she died his friends feared that he had lost his only good protector. But the Sadr Azem (Grand Vazir), then known as the Amin-es-Sultan,[1] became his ever watchful friend, and eventually led the nation to act as executors of the will of Nasr-ed-Din Shah, in securing the peaceful succession of the heir, whom he had appointed.

The Kaim-makam (Lieutenant-Governor), on the part of the Vali Ahd, entertained me at dinner, previous to my departure, and I then learnt that my visit had created a good impression. I would here mention that a few days after the Vali Ahd's succession to the throne in May 1896, he caused a telegram to be despatched to me, conveying his compliments, to which I sent a reply expressing my highest respect, and offering my best services. It was evident that he desired to have in me an unofficial friend.

I left Tabriz on 12th November, riding post to Julfa on the Russian frontier (80 miles), and arriving there the following morning. My travelling companion, the Nawab, returned to Tehran. I had to stay a day at Julfa, as I had outridden my pack ponies. I crossed the Araxes, which forms the boundary with Russia, on the 14th, and after the customs and passport examination, which was much simplified by a letter kindly given to me by M. Petroff, the Russian Consul General at Tabriz, I continued my journey by post "troitka," a three horse abreast springless cart (a terribly jolty conveyance) until Nakchivan (26

[1] His Highness the Atabeg Ali Asghar Khan, G.C.B., late Grand Vazir.

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miles) was reached. From that onward to the railway, 240 miles, there was a well-made, carefully laid road, over which I found travelling easy, for I soon exchanged my troitka for a comfortable droshky. I had a magnificent view of Mount Ararat as I passed up towards Erivan; it had received a fresh coating of first winter snow, and stood out gloriously white in a cold blue sky. I fell in with several detachments of Russian infantry, "time expired" men returning to their homes, and I found the railway station at Akstafa crowded with them, waiting for a train to Batoum. Two young officers of the party seemed to recognise me at once as an Englishman, and introduced themselves courteously to me, and on learning that I was General Gordon, the Military Attaché to the British Legation at Tehran, and had passed through Erivan two days before, they said their regiment was there, and had the officers known of my arrival, they would have been glad to entertain me; in fact, as they put it in their wildly hospitable way, to make me drunk. They said that the name of Gordon was well known in their army, as a famous Scot, Patrick Gordon, served under Peter the Great, and was at one time Captain in the 1st Guards, the celebrated "Preobrajensxy" regiment. In Russia the courtesies of the comradeship of arms are sometimes too severely pressed on those who are not case-hardened by their hot hospitality, and it is said that one of the British officers of a regimental deputation sent to salute their Imperial Colonel at St Petersburg, who found himself being forced to take more than he could carry, burst out with the French at his command: "Nous sommes venus ici pour la hospitalité, non pour l'ivresse."

I reached London on 29th November (1892), travelling by rail to Batoum, thence by the Black Sea to Odessa, touching at Sevastopol and Eupatoria, and on by rail *viâ* Berlin. I was on duty under the

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Foreign Office till the 31st January 1893, when I retired, as I considered that I had done my full share of work abroad. I had six months previously submitted, through Sir Frank Lascelles, my application to resign my appointment, with effect from about the end of the year, and this was granted by the Marquis of Salisbury, who wrote:—

"I have to request you to inform General Gordon that it is with great regret that I accept his resignation of the post of Oriental and Military Secretary at Tehran, the duties of which he has performed with zeal and ability, and to the complete satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government."

Sir Frank Lascelles in his despatch to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated Tehran, 9th November 1892, with eference to my approaching retirement, wrote:—

"General Gordon will be greatly missed at Tehran. The Shah and the Amin-es-Sultan (Grand Vazir) have expressed their regret at his departure. I am glad to have this opportunity of recording my appreciation of the services rendered by General Gordon during the time we have been together in Persia, and at the same time of expressing my gratitude for the advice and assistance he was always ready to afford me, and which his knowledge of the language and the country, coupled with his sound judgment and high character, rendered especially valuable."

Lord Rosebery, who was now at the head of the Foreign Office, sent the above to me with the following from himself.

"I have received from Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran a despatch (Sir F. Lascelles No. 170), of which I have great pleasure in sending you a copy, reporting the general feeling of regret in that Capital at your departure.

"I take this opportunity of expressing my own regret at your retirement from the post of Military Attaché to

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Her Majesty's Legation in Persia, and my appreciation of the valuable services which you have rendered to Her Majesty's Government during your tenure of that appointment."

Sir Horace Walpole, Assistant Under Secretary of State, wrote on 13th April 1893:—

"I am desired by the Earl of Kimberley to acquaint you that the Government of India, having learnt your resignation of the appointment of Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Legation at Tehran, have addressed a despatch to His Lordship, in which they record their sense of the assistance you have from time to time afforded them during your connection with the Legation.

"They mention that you have furnished them with several useful and interesting reports on Persia, which, from your wide knowledge of the country and the people, have been of special value, and that they are greatly indebted to you for your aid in this respect.

"Lord Kimberley, I am desired to say, has much pleasure in communicating to you, in accordance with the request of the Government of India, this expression, in which he entirely concurs, of their appreciation of your services in Persia."

Immediately on my return to London I had furnished to the Foreign Office a special report concerning the Vali Ahd, and the state of affairs in Persia, and for this I had the pleasure to receive Lord Rosebery's thanks. I also had the honour to be received at the Foreign Office by His Lordship, when a conversation took place with reference to that report. Shortly after, at the request of the Indian Office, in communication with the Foreign Office, I formulated my idea of a policy for Persia on moderate lines, to begin with an increase of Consular posts in Southern Persia.

I have told how the part I took as the "candid friend" in speaking the unpalatable truth to His Autocratic Majesty the Shah on two occasions, in

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October 1890 and January 1892, did not place me in disfavour, and now further, to show his special appreciation, a gold-mounted sword was sent to me in March 1893, with the following letter from the "Sadr Azam" (Grand Vazir).

"In recognition of your good qualities (described in complimentary detail) which have come under the observation of His Imperial Majesty the Shah, a gold-mounted sword from the special armoury has been bestowed upon you as a mark of the Royal favour. I therefore have the greatest pleasure in sending you this sword, and I congratulate you most heartily on being the fortunate recipient of this honourable gift. I desire also to renew to you the assurances of my highest regard."

(Signed with seal) "SADR AZAM."

I submitted this letter to Lord Rosebery, who replied that he had much pleasure in giving his cordial assent to my acceptance of the sword.

The sword is the Persian "shimshir" (Eng. scimitar) with a fine Damascus blade bearing the name of Shah Abbas the Great, who ruled over Persia more than three hundred years ago; and also the maker's name, "Assad-ulla of Isfahan."

Lord Rosebery wrote to me on 12th May 1893:—

"On your return from Persia I was anxious to mark my sense of your public services by obtaining for you some token of distinction from the Queen. I have, however, no means of doing this directly, and so I applied to Lord Kimberley, who readily agreed to recommend you to Her Majesty for the honour of K.C.I.E., and who kindly consented to my being the channel of a communication which will, I hope, be as agreeable to you as it is to me."

I was duly gazetted to this honour on 3rd June, and was knighted by H.M. Queen Victoria, at Osborne, on 8th August 1893.

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In 1897 I was nominated by the Queen's command to be attached to His Royal Highness Prince Amir Khan, Sardar, cousin of the Shah, who came from Persia to represent His Imperial Majesty at the Diamond Jubilee celebration. In his suite was General Karim Khan, an old friend of mine, whom I had first met at Isfahan, where he was well known as Karim Agha, the commander of the remarkably efficient force maintained at Isfahan for some time by the eldest son of the late Shah, who had to give way in the succession to the throne. Both the Prince Amir Khan, who was of great stature, and General Karim Khan showed to advantage in the mounted procession, and, like most Persians, they rode well.

I was appointed Knight Commander of the most Honourable Order of the Bath on the 23rd of May 1900, and received the insignia from H.M. the Queen at Windsor, on the 7th of July that year. I think this was the last ceremonial investiture of the Orders of Knighthood held by the late Queen Victoria.

In May 1902 I was nominated by the King's command to be attached to His Royal Highness the Muayed-ed-Dowleh, first cousin of the Shah, who came from Persia to represent His Imperial Majesty at the Coronation, and I had the honour of being present at that historic ceremony in Westminster Abbey on 9th August 1902.

The Shah came to Europe in 1900, but his visit to England was not accomplished owing to the Queen and the Court being in mourning for the death of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. He made a short stay in Ostend, and I went there to pay my respects to him; my wife accompanied me, and was presented to the Shah on the occasion. His Majesty came to Europe again in 1902, and arrived in London on a short visit in August. I attended the Levée held the day after his arrival, and on an official of the Lord Chamberlain's

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department explaining in French to the Persian Chief Chamberlain who I was, the Shah spoke out in Persian: "General Gordon? Oh, I know General Gordon well," and shook hands heartily with me. I had further opportunities of seeing His Majesty, and my friend his Grand Vazir, whom I had known since 1890. It was desired to favour me with the Order of the "Lion and the Sun" of Persia, but I gave satisfactory reasons for this honour, an exceptional one on that occasion, not being conferred on me. Later, I was informed of the Shah's intention to confer on Lady Gordon the rare and highly distinguished Persian Order, "Afetab" (Sun), set in brilliants (reserved for ladies), which in due course was transmitted through the Legation in London. (The gracious permission of H.M. the King to wear this decoration has been given to Lady Gordon.) My wife had assisted me in entertaining the Shah's cousins and representatives, the Princes Amir Khan, Sardar, and the Muayed-ed-Dowleh, who came to London as Royal guests for the Diamond Jubilee in 1897, and the Coronation in 1902.

I now go back in this personal memoir to speak of my Civil occupation on the London Board of the Imperial Bank of Persia. It was considered that my knowledge of Persia and my friendly relations with the Shah and his Ministers would be of advantage to the Board, and I was elected a Director in 1893. A misunderstanding having arisen between the Persian Government and the Bank in 1895, I was deputed to Tehran to explain, and was able to assist towards the re-establishment of friendly relations. When I had arranged the matter with the Grand Vazir, I had audience of the Shah (Nasr-ed-Din), to deliver the formal complimentary and other messages from the Chairman and the Board, and after a few minutes' conversation on the subject of my mission, His Majesty said with a smile: "That is all satisfactorily ended; now tell me about the Baghdad railway." He was

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anxious regarding the report that a branch line would be built to his frontier at Khanikin. I said that in the first place it would be a long time before the main line reached Baghdad; in the second, it would probably be carried on to the Gulf before the branch to Khanikin would be commenced; and thirdly, the simultaneous construction of a Persian line from Tehran, Hamadan, and Kirmanshah, to meet the Baghdad branch at Khanikin, would safeguard the frontier, and greatly encourage the extension of agriculture and commerce in those fertile districts. I also said that in the meanwhile the rich resources of the Karun valley should be used to strengthen the Persian frontier in that direction in such a manner as to create a strong flank defence against any danger he might apprehend from the Baghdad railway, and I gave a short sketch of what might be done. He ordered the Grand Vazir to make a note of it, and added that he would wish engineers from Holland to survey the district and report on a comprehensive irrigation scheme. My journey out to Persia on this occasion was *viâ* Berlin, Breslau, and Odessa, thence by the Black Sea to Batoum, and on to the Caspian. I had a severe winter journey home, *viâ* Baku, Petrosk, Moscow, and St Petersburg, reaching London in December 1895. During my stay at Tehran I was the guest of Her Majesty's Minister, Sir H. Mortimer Durand,[1] whom I had the pleasure of knowing in India.

Hitherto the Persian problem in relation to railways has generally been discussed from a European point of view, and I now propose to present the subject from a Persian point of view, in regard to national interests. Russia's hold over the Persian Government owing to the railway agreement and the obligations

[1] The Right Hon. Sir H. Mortimer Durand, G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington.

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imposed by her financial loans, has led to the belief that she will have no difficulty in securing the necessary concessions when it suits her policy to extend her railways into Persia. Mention is frequently made in the newspapers of projected Russian lines through Persian territory, down the eastern and western borders, in connection with the Trans-Caspian and Caucasian systems. Persia would be within her rights were she to propose making these railways herself for commercial and strategical purposes, but even then, the international rights of nations, in their pacific relations with each other, would justify the adjoining states, if they saw cause for alarm, or anticipated any possible danger of aggression, in requesting explanations and assurances. In the event of Persia submitting to strong pressure and giving the concessions for such railways to Russia, there would certainly be peremptory demand by her neighbours for explanation of her action in permitting, or assisting, a great armed power to occupy a commanding position on their frontiers. It is enough to place the matter in this light to see how impossible it would be for Persia to give her *free* consent to the Russian railways in question.

In the exercise of her absolute right of self-defence against her powerful neighbours, Persia can only rely on diplomacy, and the recognised rules of international law and justice which govern the conduct of sovereign states in their intercourse with each other. But for the present, Russia may be regarded as unable or disinclined to spend millions in order to satisfy vague political ambitions, and therefore time may be given to Persia to encourage the introduction of foreign capital for the construction of commerical railways, where trade and traffic promise good returns. I would premise, however, that it will be necessary for Persia to show satisfactory progress in the path of

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administrative and financial reform, before capitalists are likely to take the risks of railway enterprise in her territory.

The two most promising commercial lines for Persian interests would be, I think, one from Tehran to Khanikin (80 miles from Baghdad), *viâ* Hamadan and Kirmanshah, a distance of 370 miles, and a light branch line from Kirmanshah to Ahwaz, on the Karun river, 270 miles. The former would pass over what may be generally described as easy country, until the descent from the plateau of Persia to the plain of Mesopatamia is reached, at the foot of which lies Khanikin. The descent presents no very great engineering difficulties. The busy thoroughfare of antiquity between Media and Babylonia lay that way, and it has been the popular route to the sacred shrines of Kerbela and Nejef, *viâ* Baghdad, for centuries. The ever flowing streams of pilgrims that pass along it from Persia are said to number quite a hundred thousand each year, and this traffic would probably increase with railway facilities, as has been found to be the case in India. It has been authoritatively stated that the Baghdad railway project is certain to be carried out: the completion of this great undertaking, and its connection *viâ* Aleppo with Damascus and the Hedjaz line, will draw thousands of pilgrims to the holy places of Islam in Arabia, and also bring Tehran into quick communication with Constantinople and the capitals of Europe. The Persian line would traverse districts rich in corn and wool, and other products, that would not only supplement and cheapen the Tehran markets, but would also afford a large surplus for foreign export by the branch line from Kirmanshah.

This branch line would run to Ahwaz on the Karun, 270 miles, whence there is a water-way of 100 miles for steamers of 300 tons to the Persian Gulf

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port, Mohamrah, accessible to vessels of 1,500 tons. Thus Persian trade would avoid Turkish territory, and escape the transit dues now paid on the large volume which enters by the Baghdad route. This line would pass through fertile districts, and it is said that a 2-foot 6-inch guage railway could be cheaply built, as the rise along the banks of the Kerkhah stream to the plateau at Kirmanshah is believed to be gradual. Such a line would not only monopolise the existing trade, which at present passes up the Tigris to Baghdad by steamer, and thence to Persia by caravan, but would enormously develop it. The cost of transport of goods from Baghdad to Tehran is, roughly, £14 per ton, and from Busrah to Baghdad £1, 14s. per ton. Prohibitive Russian rates compel foreign goods for Tabriz and the north of Persia to enter by the Trebizond route, making a caravan journey of 580 miles. With railway communication to Hamadan from the south, the caravan journey to Tabriz would be reduced to nearly one-half, and it may well be supposed, that considering the great cost of caravan transport, the traders supplying the northern markets would soon find their advantage in adopting the southern route.

The question of fuel which arises in connection with these proposed railways is met by the proved existence of valuable petroleum deposits between Kirmanshah and Khanikin; and it is fully expected that the exploration of the oil-fields in the Karun districts, now being carried on by the Burma Oils Company, will prove equally successful, and thus secure an abundant supply of liquid fuel. The advent of railway enterprise would also direct more practical attention to the coal resources of the Tehran districts. The coal is of good quality, and finds a market in the capital to the extent of about 15,000 tons annually. Of course it will be understood that, follow-

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ON THE KASVIN-TEHRAN ROAD: PASSENGER WAGGONS USED BY PILGRIMS.

Sevraguine photo.] [*To face page* 348.

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ing the general custom in the East, the people mostly prefer charcoal and wood for household use, and therefore the Tehran demand for coal is chiefly confined to the European quarter. The average selling rate is high, about £2 a ton, owing to want of competition, and the heavy cost of carriage to the town on camels and donkeys.

I was occupying myself in the spring of 1896 writing a small work on Persia, when the startling news of the assassination of the Shah, Nasr-ed-Din, on the eve of his jubilee of reign, was received, and I then published my book, "Persia revisited," May, 1896, with two additional chapters, one dealing with the new Shah and his brothers, and the other with the able and sagacious Grand Vazir, Ali Asghar Khan, and the succession. I may say that this book was favourably reviewed in the Press and well received by the public.

Occasion again arose in 1898 for another visit to Tehran in the interests of the Imperial Bank of Persia. The Chief Manager found it impossible to settle a very important matter with the Persian Government, and he telegraphed for personal assistance from the Board of Directors. My wife accompanied me, and we left London in the middle of September, travelling *vid* Vienna, Cracow, and Odessa, to the Black Sea, which we crossed to Batoum in the most perfect weather. We had a comfortable railway journey thence to Baku, and a good passage from Baku to Resht, but the road to Tehran for 100 miles from the coast was still then a rough riding track, with almost quite unfurnished post houses, and the travelling on it could not but be uncomfortable to a lady. I had taken saddlery and some few articles of camp equipment from London, and with a first-rate Belgian courier who knew the road well, and some mounted Persian servants, with a quick-moving sumpter mule, carrying a supply of creature comforts sent from Tehran to meet us, we managed to get along

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fairly well. My business in Tehran proved to be easy enough after one or two interviews with my friend the Grand Vazir; and the new Shah, Mozuffer-ed-Din, seemed glad to see me. In token of complete satisfaction with my visit to Tehran, His Majesty favoured me with his photograph bearing the Imperial autograph, and I may add that the Bank had good reason to be pleased with the result of my mission. A good deal of pleasure also was combined with business on this occasion, and my wife enjoyed thoroughly her visit to the capital of Persia. The dinner parties given by Her Majesty's Minister (Sir Mortimer Durand), His Highness the Grand Vazir, His Highness the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and His Highness the Minister for War in compliment to my wife and myself, and the numerous visits paid and received, showed a social success and very friendly feeling. My wife and I enjoyed at the British Legation the kind hospitality of Sir Mortimer and Lady Durand during our visit to Tehran.

We had a cold journey back to the Caspian in November. The usual bitter winter wind had set in before we left Tehran, and this made our ride over the Kharzan pass very trying. The winter storms too had commenced on the Caspian, and our feeling of depression was great when we saw the mail steamer at Enzelli (for Resht) come in merely to go away at once without attempting to land or embark passengers, owing to the heavy surf. After two days spent in the vain hope of seeing her come back (as the weather had improved), we decided to take passage to Baku in the small trading steamer *Oural*, 187 tons, rather than remain longer in discomfort at dismal Enzelli. The *Oural's* light draught allowed of her passing the bar at the mouth of the Enzelli lagoon, and we left on 17th November, occupying the small deck-house, the only cabin accommodation available. The deck was

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cumbered with about ninety passengers and their goods, and there was hardly any vacant space to be seen. We started in the evening, and got on well enough till the evening of the following day, when the captain said that the heavy sea and strong head wind which had risen were too much for his boat at night, and he took shelter behind the island of Sari, where I had been storm-bound on a previous voyage.

The next morning we crept out in a thick mist, and shortly after fell in with the steamship *Arax* that had picked up a boat with six men in it belonging to the wrecked steamer *Skalposki* from Lenkoran for Baku, which, crowded with passengers, was badly aground on a submerged bank since the previous afternoon. As the *Arax* was going to the south-east, and the place of the wreck was not far out of our course for Baku, the *Oural* took the boat's crew on board, and steered for the wreck, going slowly, as there was still a thick mist as well as a high sea, and reached it in the evening. The vessel had not gone to pieces, notwithstanding the heavy seas breaking over her forepart, which had gone deep into the soft bank; this had thrust her afterpart high up, partly out of the water, and she had heeled over on her port side, right to the water's edge, sloping the deck to an angle of about 30°. The passengers and crew were clinging to the side rails and the bridge, and wherever there was holding on the starboard side. There came from them a ceaseless hum of crying voices, still uncertain of their lives, for there was a very heavy sea running. But the *Oural's* crew were soon at work with their one safe boat (the other was found, when lowered to leak dangerously), and a hawser was passed to the wreck, by means of which two boats, carrying ten passengers each, were able to pass to and fro, and rescue every one on board the *Skalposki*, a total of one hundred and fifty-one men and three women, mostly Oriental

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Russian subjects. Perfect order prevailed while the rescue was proceeding. The women were first cared for, and one man, who lowered himself down a rope in his eager hurry to get into the first boat, was left for some time hanging over the side (evidently tied to the rope) as a warning and punishment. The wind kept rising while the boats were passing to and fro, and all were saved just in time, for it was evident that the vessel was certain to break up during the night. The passengers lost almost everything they had on board, and they were shoeless, as they had been better able to cling to the slippery slope of the deck with bare feet. The captain was the last to leave the wreck, and he came on board the *Oural* hugging his cabin clock. The deck of our 187-ton vessel, previously crowded with ninety passengers, and now increased by one hundred and fifty-four more, was a curious sight; but all shook down patiently and cheerfully, and the *Oural*, after labouring and rolling heavily all night and part of the following day, reached Baku in safety. I have mentioned this shipwreck to show how admirably the sufferers behaved throughout, and the chivalrous care that was taken to provide first for the safety of the women.

We made a short stay at Tiflis on our way over from Baku to Batoum, and proceeded home *viâ* Constantinople, Athens, Corfu, Naples, and Rome.

I shall finish this narrative of my varied life by saying that, retaining my interest in Persia and Persian affairs, and keeping myself *au courant* of all that transpires relating to them, I was able to write "The Problem of the Middle East" in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* of March 1900, and to contribute part of "Persia and the Persian Gulf," which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* of January 1902.

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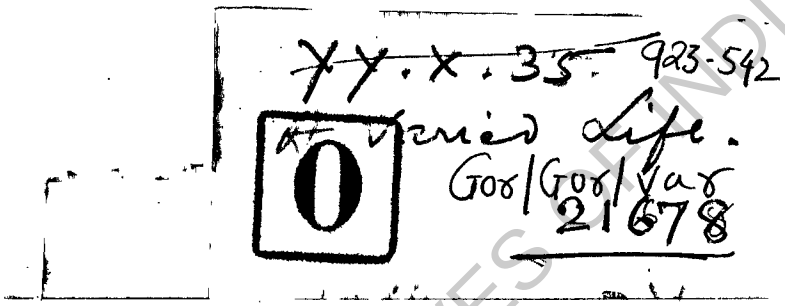

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